



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety

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TO: House Committee on Business and Transportation

FROM: Robert Reichenberg, Chair
Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 694-A

Introduction

SB 694-A allows a motorcyclist to travel between lanes of traffic during certain slow down and traffic congestion situations.

Discussion

The Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety (GAC-MS) is comprised of eight volunteer citizens who advise the Governor and the Governor's Highway Safety Representative on motorcycle safety issues and legislation. The GAC-MS reviews legislation that could affect motorcycle safety in Oregon.

In 2010 the GAC-MS held a public hearing in the Portland area to hear input on whether a public opinion survey should be funded to ascertain support for motorcycle lane sharing in Oregon. Over 300 motorcyclists attended the public meeting. However; the GAC-MS opted not to fund the survey.

The GAC-MS has discussed, debated and identified merits and problems with this legislation many times over the last five years. Initially the GAC-MS decided at our March 19th meeting to support SB 694. However, at the April 16, 2015 meeting we reversed our support and are now opposed to SB 694-A.

Committee discussion in support of SB 694-A addressed the refinements to the speed differential brought by the introduction of the -1 amendment. Initially the committee felt that a low speed version should bring the general public on board with the idea. There was discussion regarding the education that will be needed to change perceptions by the general motoring public.

However, at the April meeting the Committee considered input from law enforcement about how difficult this legislation will be to enforce, even in low speed situations. We also heard from our motorcycle training experts at TEAM OREGON about use of escape routes and the dangers of sharing lane space. ODOT has provided crash data that is contrary to motorcyclists' perception that they are in danger of being rear-ended in stopped or slowed traffic jam situations. As a result of this input the GAC-MS decided by a 4-3 vote to oppose SB 694-A.