

MEASURE: SB 878  
EXHIBIT: 3  
HOUSE TRANS & ECON DEVEL  
DATE: 5-18-15 PAGES: 2  
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May 16, 2015

To: House Transportation and Economic Development Committee

Re: Testimony regarding SB 878

Thank you for having this hearing today.

I have been riding motorcycles for the past 30-plus years. I ride on the street, trails, motocross tracks, and dirt roads. ORS 814.200 states that it is illegal not to sit on the motorcycle's seat. Any experienced rider will tell you that transferring your weight from your buttocks to your feet, adds stability and control while going over obstacles or uneven terrain. This is especially true while riding motorcycles on gravel, dirt, and uneven surfaces.

SB 878 simply erases line "a," that the motorcycle operator commits a Class B violation if he, or she, fails to sit on the seat. ORS 814.200 will still provide a violation for riding side-saddle, not facing forward, standing on anything other than the foot pegs, or carrying something that prevents the operator from keeping both hands on the handlebars.

Standing on motorcycle foot pegs is not a "stunt," it is a technique employed by riders to deal with certain situations that may arise, in order to increase control and avoid a crash. Similarly, where do you place one or both hands on the steering wheel while driving a car? I imagine you use different parts of the steering during different situations in order to maintain control of the car. It would be difficult for state law to dictate the position of your hands on the steering wheel during different driving situations, such as while shifting gears, changing lanes, during certain speeds, cornering at various radiuses, etc. It should be up to the rider as to whether he, or she, should stand to increase their control of the motorcycle.

Currently, ORS 814.200 contradicts the Oregon Motorcycle Handbook, as well as the motorcycle handbooks of California, Washington, Nevada, and many others. "If you have to ride over the obstacle, you should: Slow down as much as possible before contact. Make sure the motorcycle is straight. Rise slightly off the seat with your weight on the foot pegs to absorb the shock with your knees and elbows. This will help you from being thrown off the motorcycle." ("2014-2015 Oregon Motorcycle and Moped Manual", pg 32.)

This law has been in place for over 20 years and it's original intent may have been to cite people for standing on the motorcycle's seat while riding. There are other laws now in place that more accurately reflect a violation related to

stunt riding. For example, "speed racing on highway," "careless driving," and "reckless driving," all allow officers to cite someone for unsafe or stunt riding. Violations can range from class A to Class B traffic violations. Being cited for standing on the foot pegs while riding does not make sense, it's like being cited for safely avoiding a crash.

Oregon is rapidly becoming a destination for "dual sport" motorcycle riders on vacation. Dual sport motorcycles, are designed to be ridden on the pavement and the dirt. Standing on the foot pegs optimizes the control of the motorcycle while riding on rough or uneven surfaces. Oregon's beautiful landscape and vast network of primitive roads attracts dual sport riders. Many of Oregon's rural communities that provide goods and services, could benefit from this rapidly growing population of new tourists. These riders should not be given tickets for an infraction that contradicts proper riding technique and Oregon's own motorcycle handbook.

SB 878 has the support of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety and the American Motorcycle Association. Amy Joyce, representing the Oregon Department of Transportation, has gone record stating that ODOT has "no safety concerns about the bill." Please support SB 878 and change ORS 814.200 to allow Oregon motorcyclists to ride safer and have laws with common sense.

Thank you for your attention today.

Respectfully, Ethan Lodwig