

Dear Oregon Senators:

I am writing to support legalizing or deregulating lanesharing by motorcycles.

I am a city planner studying transportation planning at Portland State University. I have worked as a city planner for eight years. Encouraging motorcycling makes our cities better by reducing traffic congestion and demand for parking. I am also a motorcyclist who has been on the road for nine years without a collision or crash. Legal lanesharing is a skill I used to stay safe on the road.

In California, where lanesharing is unregulated, motorcyclists share lanes in order to safely and efficiently travel. They make judgments about their own safety and how to protect themselves on the road. I motorcycled in California for eight years, and lanesharing kept me safe* and allowed me to use the roads without contributing to congestion.**

Lanesharing allows motorcyclists to take responsibility for our own safety instead of relying on the drivers behind us and next to us to pay attention to the road. Cars are full of distractions that take drivers' attention off the road.

Lanesharing allows motorcyclists to protect ourselves from deadly rear-end collisions and from being crushed between the front and rear of cars. The "lanes between the lanes" are the safest place to be in traffic.

Distracted drivers bear none of the costs of these collisions that could have been avoided if lanesharing were legal. It is unjust: After they collide with us because they were fiddling with their car's touchscreen, they take their car to a body shop for repairs. We die.

Lanesharing keeps motorcyclists safer by reducing the time we are exposed to the elements. In heat, we do not have air conditioners. We rely on airflow to keep us cool in our ventilated safety gear so that we can remain alert. In the cold and rain, we do not have heaters and roofs, so the sooner we can get home, the less miserable we are.

Lanesharing safely is easier than it seems from the driver's seat of a car. It is clear when cars will change lanes. A driver can only change lanes into an empty space. A motorcyclist passes between cars when they cannot merge.

It is easier for a driver to see lanesplitting motorcyclists because they are never in the blind spot. They are always visible in the side-view mirror.

SB 385 allows Oregon motorcyclists to take responsibility for our own safety. I urge you to support it.

I urge you to reject any bill that would substitute safe lanesharing for legalized use of the shoulder. The shoulder is a dangerous place to ride for several reasons.

Sincerely,

Steven Rosen

* UC Berkeley scientists have shown that lanesharing reduces injury and makes motorcyclists safer.
<http://www.ots.ca.gov/pdf/Publications/Motorcycle-Lane-Splitting-and-Safety-2015.pdf>

** Transportation and Mobility Leuven has shown that lanesharing reduces congestion.