



OREGON TRUCKING ASSOCIATIONS, INC.

## Before the Senate Judiciary Committee Senate Bill 385

Testimony of Bob Russell  
Vice President Government Affairs  
Oregon Trucking Associations  
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Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the continuation of the public hearing on Senate Bill 385. Instead, I am submitting my testimony in writing.

The number one priority for the Oregon Trucking Associations is highway and employee safety. Unfortunately, we oppose Senate Bill 385 because we believe that it will compromise highway safety.

I spend quite a bit of time in the Bay Area where they do allow lane splitting. One thing I observe is the percentage of trucks on Bay Area freeways is much less than the freeways in the Portland area. This makes sense because Oregon is a bridge state with a lot of truck traffic moving between California and Washington. Our freeway capacity, in terms of the number of lanes is also much less than in the urban areas of California.

In the Portland area, it is common for trucks to occupy more than one lane. Because of the number of interchanges, trucks often operate in the center lane to avoid vehicles merging onto the freeways. In many instances, trucks operate side by side. A motorcyclist splitting lanes could be between two trucks. This is problematic because trucks are wider than other vehicles leaving less room for lane splitting motorcycles. On some Portland freeways, the lanes are actually less than 12 feet wide. This again reduces the available space for lane splitting motorcycles.

When a motorcyclist splits lanes, the motorcycle is often passing a truck on the right-hand side. There is a significant blind spot on the right side of most highway trucks. Since motorcycles are smaller than other vehicles, it is understandable that truck drivers would not always be able to see a motorcyclist splitting lanes. The

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truck driver could attempt to maneuver without knowing that a motorcycle is in his or her blind spot. This would not end well for the motorcyclist.

We also believe that Senate Bill 385 is unenforceable. A law enforcement officer would have to first determine the speed of traffic generally to make sure that it is below 10 miles per hour and then determine the speed of the motorcyclist to make sure that he or she was operating below 20 miles per hour. The officer would then have to pursue the motorcyclist splitting lanes. The odds of accomplishing all of this are not in the officer's favor.

For these reasons, the members of the Oregon Trucking Associations ask that you not move Senate Bill 385 forward. Thank you.