

26 Apr 2017, Jef Treece's public comment in opposition to SB-532

Hello Committee Members,

I write in opposition to SB532, a feel-good measure that is one-sided and would create far more problems than it purports to solve.

I have read articles, opinions, and the text, testimonies, and other material from this web resource:

<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Measures/Exhibits/SB532>

Oregon already has code such as 811.315 to keep slow drivers in the right lane. Additional confusing and problem-ridden code will not be effective. However, let's look at some facts:

- There is no supporting data that leads to a conclusion that using the left-lane for more than passing is dangerous. Many people have tried and failed to make this connection. This even applies if the person in the left lane is driving slowly, which is not always the case.
- Oregon code makes no provision for exceeding the posted speed limit. The wording of the measure is such that if the normal speed is less than the posted speed limit, it's acceptable to use the left lane for more than passing. It follows logically that the ONLY time the measure, as written, is effective is when the speed is exactly the posted speed limit. This is unenforceable.
- The measure would reduce the effectiveness of the existing roadway. Leveraging all lanes of traffic on congested roads means more travel and space is possible on our roads.
- Language in the measure and the language that the public is using obviously fails to take into account the perspective of the person who is in the left lane attempting to pass. There are always two sides, and this side should be considered. It creates animosity to label everyone "hogs" and such without even attempting to understand the issue from different angles.
- With no provision for exceeding the speed limit to pass, the "passing lane" concept is already problematic. This needs to be addressed in code in conjunction with any additional language.
- Whether or not someone is passing or hogging becomes the judgement of the parties involved, and the measure does not help address this. Is the enforcement officer's opinion of what a safe following distance is equal to both drivers' opinions?
- Since the measure does not prevent people from passing on the right, there can easily be situations where a person is stuck in a no-win situation. If drivers do not leave sufficient space for the person on the left to move over, he may be stuck in the right lane longer than someone else thinks he should be. Passing on the right must be addressed in conjunction with any new language added in this area of the code.
- Reasons cited for supporting this legislation include such things as "road rage is dangerous and letting those 'lane hogs' use the left lane increases road rage." Please villainize the person who is actually breaking a law, the aggressive driver. This proposed measure can only increase animosity, not reduce it.

Please do not support this! It creates many problems and points of confusion, and it solves none. It makes speeders and tail-gaters feel empowered and emboldened to do more of what they shouldn't be doing for everyone's safety.

Thank you,
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