

**From:** [Michael Friend](#)  
**To:** [JCT Exhibits](#)  
**Subject:** HB 2314 Motorcycle Lane Sharing Testimony  
**Date:** Monday, February 18, 2019 8:46:51 PM

---

Dear Joint Transportation Committee,

I am an Oregon resident and a long-time motorcycle rider. Oregon is a great place to live but as you may know it is difficult to get around on the freeways in the Portland Metro area these days. A partial solution for this problem is allowing motorcycles to share lanes with the traffic on our highways and freeways with posted speed limits of 50MPH or greater. I am asking you to support HB2314.

From this motorcyclist's point of view, Lane Sharing as HB2314 outlines, would work well in Oregon. It could be administered in a safe and effective way. This bill mandates a maximum school zone speeds of 20MPH. There is a 10MPH differential from when traffic is stopped to the point the motorcyclist should merge back in with traffic when traffic starts moving again in excess of 10MPH. I believe 20MPH is plenty enough speed to accomplish several different things:

1. Studies have shown that Lane Sharing is safer for the rider than not sharing lanes. The 20MPH limit is much less than California's limit and therefore would be much safer than California.
2. Although Lane Sharing is not the silver bullet for reducing traffic congestion on Oregon Highways and Freeways, it will help. As more riders are encouraged to leave their cars at home and ride their motorcycles to work, there will be some traffic relief. How that can be measured is difficult to say. It is well known in the riding community that many riders leave their motorcycles at home and drive their cars to work for it is far more comfortable to sit in a traffic jam in a car than it is on a motorcycle.
3. With more motorcycles on the road, there is obviously less emissions to worry about for a motorcycle has a smaller and more efficient engine than most cars.

I understand that stakeholders outside the motorcycle realm have valid concerns. This is understandable with something new possibly being implemented for Oregon road users.

Law Enforcement is concerned about being able to enforce Lane Sharing. There will always be people who do not fully obey traffic laws. We see it all the time with people who run red lights or do not fully stop at stop signs. Yet, we continue to have laws regarding stopping when there is a traffic control device intended to inform the driver they must stop. Many drivers go faster than the speed limits. Yet there are speed limit signs posted. It is understood that these laws are difficult to enforce 100% of the time. The number of riders who would not follow the law would be a small minority. Once there are more riders lane sharing and following the law, the riders who do not follow the law will be forced to go slower because they can only go as fast as the law abiding rider who is ahead of them.

With the low speed of 20MPH there will be fewer property damage crashes and fewer injury crashes. At 20MPH and slower no one is moving very fast. Cars typically do not abruptly change lanes although it can happen. As well, trucks rarely change lanes abruptly. A motorcyclist can easily detect a vehicle about to make a lane change and compensate for that. At 20MPH a rider can easily avoid a car changing lanes by stopping.

The trucking industry has understandable concerns. Again, we are talking about very low speeds. Trucks simply do not make sudden lane changes. The men and women that drive trucks are well trained at checking their mirrors and for overall traffic safety. As a rider, I do not worry about our truck drivers for they are the most professional and safest drivers on the road. Also as a rider, it would be very unwise to ride between two trucks. It is best wait until there is an opening and then pass by when the path is safely open again.

Passenger car drivers have concerns about motorcycles sharing lanes with them. Initially, many will be caught by surprise as riders go by them in stopped or slow traffic. Drivers learn quickly and they will soon adapt to it. Drivers have a great advance warning system on their cars which is the side mirror. The car driver would be able to see the rider coming up on them in their mirrors and can then be mentally prepared for the rider to pass by them. As more riders leave their cars at home and choose to ride their motorcycle to work, there will be less traffic on the road which should make car drivers happy.

When traffic is stopped I am very concerned about a potential rear-end crash. To counter that possibility I position my motorcycle on either side of the lane lined up with the driver's side mirrors who is in front of me. I also leave enough space in front of me so I can easily maneuver and travel between vehicles if it seems the vehicle behind me is not going to stop. Something I have discovered is that the car ahead of me will often scoot over to allow me to ride by. By law I cannot ride by, but the point is it seems many drivers are ready for motorcycle lane sharing.

Again, thank you for taking time out to review my letter. I urge you to support HB 2314.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Friend

Southeast Portland

503-449-0251