



Oregon
Kate Brown, Governor

Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety

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February 20, 2019

TO: Joint Committee on Transportation

FROM: Peter Russell, Chair
Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety

SUBJECT: House Bill 2314

The Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety (GAC-MS) is a volunteer body of eight Oregonians who advise the Governor and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) on motorcycle safety, training, education, and roadway maintenance and operations. The GAC-MS currently has seven members and all have motorcycle endorsements and are active riders.

HB 2314 would allow an operator of a motorcycle or moped to travel between vehicles within lanes of traffic under certain conditions. Essentially, traffic traveling in the same direction must be moving at 10 mph or less or be stopped. The bill only applies to roadways where the speed limit is established and/or posted at 50 mph or higher.

The GAC-MS in a special meeting on February 19 voted 5-1 to oppose HB 2314 as introduced. One member was unable to attend. The GAC-MS based its decision on several factors. The GAS-MS is concerned about the safety of all road users, not just motorcyclists. A rider would not have an escape route if the rider needed to perform evasive maneuvers. The law would be difficult if not impractical to enforce, particularly the 10-mph speed differential. The bill's language is ambiguous as to where a rider could legally position a motorcycle. Many perceive that the bill only applies to multi-lane roads, with two lanes going in the same direction and traffic moving at 10 mph or being stopped. Yet, as written, the bill would allow a rider on a two-lane road (one lane going one direction, a second lane going the opposite direction) to pass a vehicle on the right if that vehicle were traveling at 10 mph or less or was stopped. A driver on a two-lane road does not expect a motorcycle to be passing on the vehicle's right; a driver on a two-lane road expects to be passed on the vehicle's left, where permitted. All of these concerns are magnified when the rider is new to motorcycling and may not have a fully developed skill set of observation, anticipation, and response.

Lane sharing/splitting is not a topic new to the GAC-MS, as the group has had numerous discussions in the past several years, focusing on the positives and the negatives. Several GAC-MS members, present and former, have had personal experience with lane sharing/splitting outside of Oregon. The topic is of sufficient interest and duration that the GAC-MS established a subcommittee composed of two GAC members and several stakeholders. The subcommittee included both those who supported and those who opposed the concept. The subcommittee has conducted a literature review and provided a summary of its work and stakeholder viewpoints to the full GAC-MS on January 17, 2019. Broadly speaking, riders and rider organizations tend to support lane sharing/splitting while law enforcement, emergency responders, the trucking industry, American Automobile Association (AAA), and Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) are in opposition.

During the public comment period at the GAC-MS January 17 meeting, one of the supporters of HB 2314 explained the intent of the bill. The GAC-MS has heard from the riding public, law enforcement, Team Oregon, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff, and motorcycle organizations and groups regarding their opinions on past and present legislation regarding lane splitting.

The GAC-MS thanks you for receiving this testimony and trusts we have adequately explained our opposition to HB 2314 as introduced.

cc: Troy E. Costales, Transportation Safety Division Administrator