

Dear House Rules Committee,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 998, which would allow people on bicycles to enter intersections controlled by specified traffic control devices without stopping when it is safe to do so. Your votes in support of this bill will make our roads safer for people on bicycles and help support the State of Oregon in achieving climate action/greenhouse gas reduction goals as 40% of our greenhouse gas emissions are attributable to transportation and bicycles are a near zero carbon part of our transportation system. Laws that make it easier for people to ride a bike rather than go into the car for a short trip can play a role in reducing congestion while improving safety, air quality, and the future viability of our planet.

As a regular bicycle commuter for over seven years accounting for 20,000+ miles, the most frustrating intersections are ones where there is a stop sign and no other vehicles are present, meaning that I have the right of way yet have to stop even though no one else is using the intersection. At these low traffic intersections stopping momentum can create safety issues as accelerating from a stop leaves the person on a bicycle in the intersection for a longer period of time and exposes them to potential harm in the form of a reckless car driver ignoring a stop sign and speeding through the intersection - something that has become more common as traffic enforcement is not prioritized. This action is equivalent to turning off the engine of a car at every stop sign though without the benefit of an internal combustion engine that requires only the light press of a foot to get moving again.

I would encourage any Representatives who are uncertain about the impact of SB 998 to spend a few minutes watching this video <https://vimeo.com/4140910> which discuss the benefits of this law and why it is so important. The retention of momentum at controlled intersections where the person on a bicycle would have the right of way will make riding a bicycle safer and more viable for people considering riding for a short trip in the future.

Respectfully,

David Stein
Resident and cyclist, SW Portland, Multnomah County
Member, City of Portland Citizens' Bicycle Advisory Committee (these comments are my own and not on behalf of this body)