

I am a resident of Portland, a pedestrian, a driver, a pedal cyclist and a motorcyclist. I understand there are inherent risks to all the activities listed, especially pedal cycling and motorcycling. I am urging you to support HB574 because it is not dangerous, and it has multiple benefits.

The benefits are varied, But the main thing is it allows motorcycles to safely get through traffic. Motorcycles are sitting ducks in the middle of the freeway when traffic is stopped. Being rear-ended and sandwiched between two cars is every motorcyclist's nightmare. Even though that rarely happens, and I, as a motorcyclist am far more likely to sideswipe a car while lane sharing, I (and every motorcyclist out there) would choose to do that 100 times before I would get rear ended. All we are asking is that motorcycles be allowed to keep moving when the traffic comes to a stop on certain highways. My motorcycle (BMW R1200GSA) is an air/oil cooled bike, and it doesn't like to sit still in traffic for very long. I have had to lane share in the past, because I was about to overheat in the middle of the highway. As I slowly crawled through traffic, I heard a guy yelling at me that I couldn't lane split. He was right. Unfortunately, I had to do it in order to keep my bike from dying, and then causing major delays for everyone stuck behind me. There is also a maneuver you are taught in certain safety classes, where if you come to a complete stop in traffic, you must look in your mirrors to determine if the car behind you is going to stop in time. If not, you had better share the lane with the car or cars in front of you to avoid being sandwiched. Why not simply allow motorcycles to do this maneuver to start with? Remember that whenever you are on the freeway cursing the traffic, YOU ARE the traffic! It makes sense to allow those who don't have to be there with you to get along so they are not in your way anymore. Let us lane split safely, and everyone will be better off.

Auto drivers are largely against this practice, and lane sharing puts motorcyclists and automobiles closer together than they would have otherwise been. I am willing to bet a large percentage are also against bicycles not having to stop at stop signs, or entire lanes of traffic being taken away for bike paths, or even speed limits being reduced to 20 MPH in neighborhoods. When I was riding in California before Covid19, I was lane sharing across the Golden Gate Bridge. Traffic was going about 10 MPH, and I was going through about 20MPH. When I would come upon a car in my way, I would slow down and rev my engine. The person would drift wide, I would pass safely, and then I would wave to thank them. As I passed them, I nodded in their direction and most of them nodded back or waved. It is just a matter of people getting used to the situation. As for motorcycles and cars getting too close, remember that this will be in rare situations, where traffic is all but stopped. I will simply be moving out of the way of the car behind me, and slowly passing wherever there is enough space to do so. It doesn't matter if I am passing a truck or a bus or a tiny Fiat. I will be traveling at the speed of a bicyclist only if there is enough space to do so.

Please vote YES on this bill! I promise I won't bonk your mirror.