

Submitter: Tony Fields
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: SB422

I respectfully ask that you support SB422

I strongly support SB422 because studies suggest there are many potential safety benefits to be gained from lane sharing. Lane sharing removes motorcyclists from being rear-ended or, worse, being “sandwiched” by a car in front and behind. Even in stop & go traffic such accidents can have serious consequences for a motorcyclist. With distracted driving at an all-time high, anything that reduces a motorcyclists’ exposure to these accidents is worth pursuing. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation’s (MSF) wrote that “There is evidence (Hurt, 1981) that traveling between lanes of stopped or slow-moving cars (i.e., lane splitting) on multiple-lane roads (such as interstate highways) slightly reduces crash frequency compared with staying within the lane and moving with other traffic.” In addition, other safety benefits of lane sharing include:

- Increases motorcycle’s visibility and takes them out of car drivers’ “blind spot.” A motorcyclist who is lane sharing can be seen in a car driver’s sideview mirror at all times. And a motorcycle that is moving, when surrounding traffic is stopped, is more conspicuous and visible. In places where lane sharing is legal drivers become more likely to look for, and be aware of, motorcycles.
- Gives motorcycles more maneuverability for accident avoidance. Lane sharing positions motorcyclists in open road, rather than being directly behind a vehicle, this gives them a path ahead to avoid hazards.
- Lane sharing increases motorcyclists’ “line of sight.” Being on open road means a better opportunity to see ahead to predict and avoid hazards.
- In the event of a crash, a motorcycle that is lane sharing is more likely to have a “glancing” blow to the vehicle rather than a direct hit. Such accidents are less severe because the motorcycle rider can keep moving forward rather than stopping instantly. The motorcycle rider is also more likely to remain upright.
- Keeps motorcycle riders moving, which reduces fatigue both from heat and from constant stop & go operation of the motorcycle’s controls (the vast majority of motorcycles have manual transmissions and require exertion and dexterity to operate the controls).

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Anthony Fields

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