

Submitter: Seth Paddock
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: SB422

Good day members of the committee. My name is Seth Paddock, and I am a motorcyclist in Oregon.

I could approach you today and be the latest in a potentially endless string of testimonies citing the Berkeley study on lane splitting/filtering from 2015. Instead, I think that I will just call it like it is.

Two years ago, we had a similar bill up for consideration. That version passed both houses of the legislature, and then it was vetoed by our then Governor Kate Brown. Her reason? People's icky feelings about how safe it is. We have the data on safety. The previously mentioned study, decades of safe (much less restricted) use across Europe, and most recently pilots in Montana, Arizona, and Utah. Is this the world that we want to live in? One where decisions are made by the loudest people with the most money stomping their feet and saying they don't like something? That is what this boils down to... the detractors are corporations. They try to disguise their protests in "worries about safety", but the reality is that it is worries about liability.

There is no denying the facts that it is demonstrably safer for a motorcyclist to have the option to use the space between lanes of travel to prevent being caught in avoidable collisions that are common in low-speed scenarios on the road. In a world filled with inattentive drivers - be it because they are (illegally) on their cell phones, improperly using driving assistance capabilities of modern vehicles, or just otherwise not taking their responsibility of piloting a multi-ton vehicle seriously - I would like to have every tool at my disposal to arrive safely at my destination without also having to calculate the risk that I am going to get a ticket for it. Because, right now, many of us are already doing this in a manner similar to what is outlined in this bill, and that makes us criminals for putting our right to protect ourselves in front of the current law.

Additionally, in a community that wants to pride itself on caring about the environment, it seems obvious that having any vehicle on the road that puts forth emissions being in motion is a good thing. Isn't it better to have a car, motorcycle, truck, etc. progressing down the road while it is burning fuel as opposed to stagnating on the roadways? That is another benefit of this practice. Allowing motorcycles to occupy the space between lanes in slow speed situations allows for larger vehicles to fill the space in the lane that the motorcycle would be occupying. That moves everyone down the road a little quicker.

It really is a win-win-win. Motorcyclists are safer – win. The environment gets a bit of a respite – win. Everyone's traffic burden is eased – win.

I thank you for taking the time to consider this bill, and to review my thoughts and the thoughts of other. I urge you to move this bill forward for better road use experiences for all Oregonians.