

Submitter: Chris Zolotko  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure: SB422

I'm a motorcyclist of 9 street riding years. I completed my MSF (Motorcycle Safety Foundation) course in Vancouver, Washington when I was 21. I commute mostly during the spring/summer/fall in these last 9 years. For a few years, I commuted daily from Vancouver, Washington to Hillsboro, Oregon. Now I live in Beaverton, Oregon, and commute to Hillsboro, Oregon.

Last year though, was the most frightening and infuriating experience I've had in these 9 years. I got rear-ended at a stoplight at the crossing of SW Barbur and SW Capital Hwy in Portland, OR. I completely stopped waiting for the light to turn green on a bright summer weekend day, saw them coming in at a high rate in my mirror, and all I could do was brace for impact while the tires screeched. The worst of it all wasn't that my motorcycle was damaged. Was that they ran. A hit and run. I reported it to the authorities and they couldn't do anything because I didn't have a full license plate number, they were already gone by the time I was getting myself up.

Statistically speaking, this information comes from my MSF training instructor who was a Washington State Patrol Officer. Getting hit in the rear is the most likely accident that you least expect and can predict while being on a motorcycle. In California, this stat is decreased significantly if we motorcyclists are allowed to filter / lane split in more urban areas. This bill is exciting and I really want this bill to pass, not just because of my safety, but for future motorcyclists, people will look for more efficient alternatives for commuting in a car. Gas will be more expensive, Portland will keep growing, and the highway infrastructure to support the growth will always be slow to catch up. While there are great public transportation alternatives here. Passing this bill will alleviate traffic flow for those that are on two-wheel vehicles in Oregon and will help protect them during their commute.

A terrifying experience is coming down the hill on Highway 26 in Portland and I, a motorcycle, have to stop behind a line of cars, in one lane. While the lane to my right has no traffic with cars traveling at speed, and I have to stop to go north on the 405 highway to be courteous to other drivers. I always have to make sure the car behind me sees me by flashing my rear brake and swaying back and forth because it's not a slow stop, and if someone doesn't stop fast enough it could mean a serious accident for me. It leaves me exposed and vulnerable with very little escape. This previous experience could be applied to the many highway traffic examples as well, like rush hour on i5 and 205 where certain spots become a choke point and traffic goes from at speed limit to 10 mph due to the lack of highway infrastructure to keep traffic moving smoothly.

I firmly believe passing this bill will help alternative commuting here in Oregon.