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February 27, 2023

To: Joint Committee on Transportation

Re: SB 422A, Allows motorcycle operator to travel between lanes of traffic under certain conditions.

Dear Members of the Committee:

As a long-time motorcyclist and citizen of Oregon, I believe that passage of this bill will benefit both Oregon's motorcycling community and, more broadly, the general public. I am a life-long motorcyclist and a former motorcycle safety instructor for Team Oregon, the official motorcycle safety training program for the state. I hold a degree in journalism and have worked in the field of public relations and marketing for over 30 years. I am currently employed as a content marketing strategist for Matthews International, which has offices in Wilsonville and elsewhere in Oregon.

Prior to moving to Oregon in 1994, I lived in California where I grew up. I started riding motorcycles off road as a youth and bought my first street bike when I was 16. Since lane splitting is legal in California, I have extensive first-hand experience with it.

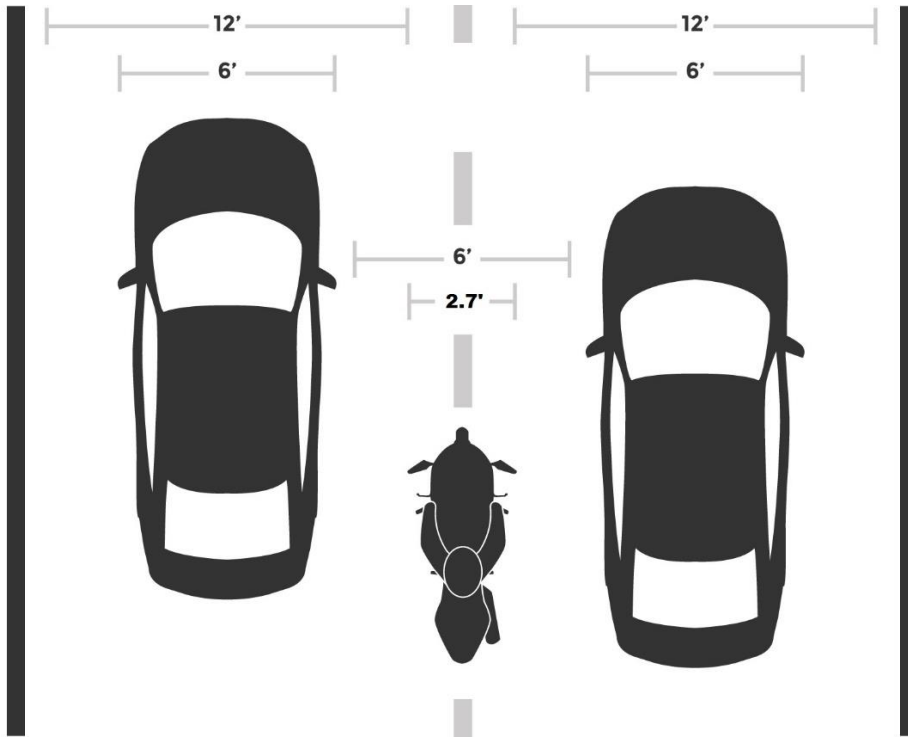
Following graduation from college, my wife and I purchased a house in Riverside. Since my job was in Costa Mesa, I needed to make a 45-mile commute each way through some of the most congested highways in the country. I opted to commute most days via motorcycle and engaged in lane splitting and lane filtering for much of the trip on a regular basis. In all, I logged some 60,000 miles along this route.

Based on this experience, I have a number of observations:

1. Lane splitting/filtering on a motorcycle is safe. Throughout the course of my long commute and many other trips throughout the LA area that involved lane splitting, I had no incidents of any kind.
2. Lane splitting reduces congestion. For my long commute, if lane splitting were not an option, I most likely would have driven my car since there would be no benefit to taking the motorcycle. As it was, I along with all the other people on motorcycles helped to remove cars from the road and lessen congestion. The same effect could happen here.
3. Car drivers become more aware of motorcycles. Car drivers can easily see lane-splitting motorcycles approaching in their side-view mirrors and many move over to accommodate riders. Compared to Oregon, California drivers are much more accustomed to the presence of motorcycles which significantly improves rider safety more broadly.

Allowing motorcycles to travel between lanes as defined in SB 422A is consistent with Team Oregon instruction. In particular, it provides motorcyclists with an "escape route" when other options have been eliminated by stop-and-go traffic situations. One of the principles Team Oregon teaches students is to always scan for an "escape route." This typically involves changing lanes should problems occur in front

or behind the rider. SB 422A would allow riders to take advantage of the approximately 6 feet of space between cars (the average width of a motorcycle is 32-in.) as shown in the illustration below.



As this illustration shows, lane filtering allows a motorcycle to use the approximately 6 feet of space between vehicles. This is space that currently goes to waste in Oregon. Given the high cost of building highways, this is a valuable public resource that should be more fully utilized.

Team Oregon is one of the premier motorcycle safety organizations in the country and has an excellent and highly professional group of instructors. I am highly confident that these instructors would be able to teach riders of all abilities the principles of safe lane filtering. This in turn will make these riders safer and ultimately reduce injuries and even save lives.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the Committee to recommend passage of SB 422A.

Best regards,

Brian Edwards

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