

Testimony in **Support** of House Bill 3626, E'RIDERS

Committee: Joint Committee on Transportation

Submitter: Megan Ramey, Safe Routes to School Manager, Founder of Bikabout, Volunteer for Anson's Bike Buddies

Dear Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain and Members of the Committee,

My name is Megan Ramey and I am a certified bike instructor by the League of American Cyclists who hosted the National Bike Summit in DC last week, where I received the [Educator of the Year Award](#).



I teach thousands of students in Hood River County bike confidence and safety, advocate for safer routes to school and donate free bikes to kids in need.

As a youth educator and a mom of a 15 year old who rides an E-bike, I am supportive of this bill.

Over the past 9 years in observing the E-bike boom in Hood River, I have written articles and been asked to present as a subject matter expert on youth and e-bikes at the National Safe Routes to School conference with my colleagues from around the country. This is a highly nuanced issue, but in order to increase safety and health in our youth, we need clear regulation that honors reality, so people like me can educate and law enforcement and government partners can provide clear communications. The reality is that the middle schoolers are riding e-bikes and scooters now and we tell them to abstain, which is a do nothing policy.

Yes, there is bad behavior, mostly among boys that are told to "send it" from a young age in mountain biking or misguided behavior from the lack of education and infrastructure.

But overwhelmingly there are many 12-15 year olds who are safely riding e-bikes to school and after school. They gradually learn independence, resourcefulness and road

law. Every year, almost 3,000 16-19 year olds die in car crashes, which is three times the rate than those older than 20. E-bikes can be a precursor to driving and help reduce that rate with more informed and empathetic teen drivers. Even better if they find they don't need to drive because an E-bike is sufficient and joyful transportation.



E-bikes can also help youth with 2 critical issues: mental health and absenteeism.

Our daughter e-biked home at 5am from a high school lock-in last Friday and told us it was calming in the fresh air and quiet. She has also done a Thanksgiving grocery run, biked her dad on Father's Day and realized the mundane becomes extraordinary when she misses the bus and has to ride to school or picks up her friends to go downtown...all technically illegal by E-bike.

For the sake of safety and the wellbeing of our strong kids, I am fully supportive of House Bill 3626.

Sincerely,

Megan Ramey



TEACH THEM TO FLY

Teens on E-Bikes

2024 Safe Routes to School Conference:
E-bikes are Electrifying the Future

Megan Ramey, Safe Routes to School Manager,
Hood River County School District

