

Submitter: Aaron Wolf  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4007

I commute by bike roughly 60 miles per week with my children. My preschooler rides on a rack seat. My elementary-age kid rides his own bike, but we connect it to my ebike with a special device, a FollowMe Tandem, in order to go up the steep hills. I ride with the motor off most of the time otherwise.

I am unwilling to put myself and my family at risk by riding right in the street with heavy, fast traffic. It is a tragedy that unbuffered, unprotected bike-lanes were ever even considered on streets with significant traffic and speeds over 25mph. We will not use them, and any legal presumption that we would is reckless and dangerous. In practice, we see ourselves in places where safety comes from using the sidewalks. We do not like this and wish there were dedicated and safe infrastructure for micromobility. Because the infrastructure is unsafe, we need legal support for making decisions that are safe for us.

I urge the updating of laws to distinguish heavier and faster vehicles (including motorcycles) from human-powered or otherwise slower and lighter vehicles. Small battery-powered vehicles like scooters and e-unicycles can go excessively fast, but putting those riders in with fast heavy cars and trucks is a recipe for horrific injuries and deaths. The law needs to accept such vehicles on whatever safer options exist, bike lanes, bikeways, and even sidewalks — as long as such riders give right of way to pedestrians and use slower speeds as appropriate.

The solution for the future is to build separate, protected, safe infrastructure for all three modes: heavy and fast, moderate micromobility, and slow foot traffic and similar. We need the law to allow people to make reasonable judgments about how to stay safe and keep others safe with the imperfect infrastructure we have rather than overly strict rules that would push people to either make dangerous decisions or to feel unable to use preferred transportation options.