

AB 1614: Vehicles: Bicycles

SUMMARY

AB 1614 expands existing law and prohibits “piggybacking” on bikes and e-bikes on a Class I bikeway.

EXISTING LAW

The California Bicycle Transportation Act establishes 4 classifications of facilities, referred to as bikeways, that provide primarily for, and promote, bicycle travel.

SB 527 (2009, Kehoe) prohibited a person from operating a bicycle on a highway if that person was riding other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat attached to the bicycle, unless the bicycle was designed by the manufacturer to be ridden without a seat. Existing law also prohibits the operator of a bike from allowing another person to ride as a passenger on a highway unless there is a separate seat attached.

However, under existing law, this prohibition is currently limited to a highway and does not apply to bicycles ridden on a Class I bikeway.

ISSUE

The increased speed and accessibility of e-bikes have consistently led to higher rates of injury, with an increasing number of injuries occurring when riders “piggyback”. With multiple riders, the driver can more easily be distracted and/or lose control causing serious injuries such as multiple/open long bone fractures, concussions and brain bleeds to all riders.

Data from the US Consumer Product Safety Commission shows that these products continue to show increases in injuries, year-over-year, rising 22% in 2022 from 2021. Nearly half (46%) of all estimated e-bike injuries from 2017 to 2022 occurred in 2022 alone. Furthermore, the same report found that children 14 years and younger accounted for about 36% of micromobility injuries from 2017 to 2022, double their 18% proportion of the U.S. population.

SOLUTION

As emerging technology continues to increase the speed and accessibility of e-bikes, this is a crucial step to ensure the safety of our communities. By bridging the existing gap in law and prohibiting “piggybacking” on Class 1 bikeways, as defined in Section 890.4 of the Streets and Highways Code, AB 1614 creates consistency within existing law and improves the safety of all riders, pedestrians and drivers.

SIMILAR LEGISLATION

SB 527 (2009, Kehoe) – Bicycles - Chaptered
AB 1774 (2024, Dixon) – Vehicles: electric bicycles – Chaptered
AB 545 (2025, Davies) – Vehicles: electric bicycles - Chaptered

SUPPORT

California Orthopaedic Association (Sponsor)
City of Irvine
Town of Hillsborough
City of Carlsbad
League of California Cities
City of Huntington Beach
City of Laguna Niguel
City of Los Alamitos
City of Mountain View
AAA Northern California, Nevada and Utah
Auto Club of Southern California (AAA)
California Association of Bicycling Organizations

OPPOSITION

People for Bikes

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact: Aaron Rice
Phone: 916-319-2072
Email: Aaron.Rice@asm.ca.gov