



March 12, 2024

The Honorable Tasha Boerner
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 4150
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2234 (BOERNER) Vehicles: Electric Bicycles – SPONSOR

Dear Assemblymember Boerner:

The City of Carlsbad is proud to sponsor your Assembly Bill (AB) 2234, which will prohibit a person under 12 years of age from operating an electric bicycle (e-bike) and prohibit anyone without a driver's license from operating an e-bike unless they possess a skills waiver. The bill will require the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to issue the skills waiver in electronic format to persons who complete safety and training programs.

In late 2022, a local state of emergency was declared in the City of Carlsbad due to a more than 200% increase in collisions involving e-bikes since 2019, including fatalities. The state of emergency allowed the City to quickly reallocate resources and to take certain immediate steps to address the threat. In 2023, the City and Carlsbad schools instituted a new school e-bike permit program, which created new safety measures for student users of e-bikes. While these actions made an impact, additional solutions are needed to create safer use of e-bikes across California and in the City of Carlsbad. This includes creating more statewide awareness of the issue as well as requiring inexperienced users of e-bikes to have the necessary training to operate them safely and legally.

This legislation is necessary because although current law requires the CHP to develop required safety and training programs for e-bike riders, there is no mechanism to ensure that users have completed these programs. E-bikes can have top speeds of up to 28 miles per hour, which is about as fast as cars go on city streets. This speed range is high enough to make e-bikes dangerous devices when operated improperly. Requiring e-bike users who do not have a driver's license to possess a skills waiver showing that they have the knowledge and ability to safely operate them will reduce collisions and fatalities involving e-bikes.

The City previously supported AB 1946 (Boerner, Chapter 147, Statutes of 2022) and is proud to continue to support measures that make our City's streets safer for pedestrians, vehicles, and e-bikes. Furthermore, the City's legislative platform supports this mission and includes the following statement:

- Support legislation that establishes requirements for E-bike rider safety training and licensing.

As e-bikes continue to grow in popularity, it is of the utmost importance to maintain safety standards that keep the community safe. It is for the reasons listed above that the City of Carlsbad is pleased to SPONSOR your Assembly Bill 2234 to enable the safer use of e-bikes. Please reach out to our lobbyist with Renne Public Policy Group, Sharon Gonsalves, at 916-849-5536 with questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Blackburn', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

Keith Blackburn
Mayor
City of Carlsbad

CC: Members and Staff of the Assembly Transportation Committee
The Honorable Catherine Blakespear, Senate District 38
Members of the Carlsbad City Council