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PeopleForBikes.org | 303.449.4893

April 6, 2021

Senator Bill Diamond, Representative Danny Martin and Members of Transportation Committee
Committee on Transportation
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Chair Diamond, Chair Martin, and Members of the Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the PeopleForBikes Coalition we are writing to provide testimony in support of LD 821, legislation that would provide new procedural mechanisms to ensure that collisions causing the injury or death of a vulnerable road user receive adequate consideration in the justice system.

The PeopleForBikes Coalition is the national advocacy group and trade association that works for better policies and infrastructure for bike riding. Our coalition includes nearly 300 companies and brands that manufacture, distribute, or sell bicycles and related products, including electric bicycles.

The safety of bike riders is critical to our organization. If people do not feel that they can safely ride their bike on public rights of way, ridership will suffer. Safe and convenient bike riding is the cornerstone of realizing the health and environmental benefits that bike riding offers Americans and our communities.

Unfortunately, a common perceived safety issue for bike riders is that they do not think they will be protected if they are innocently involved in a collision with a motor vehicle. Collisions involving bicyclists, pedestrians, and other vulnerable road users are often under reported and under investigated. Despite the serious consequences for the injured parties, their crashes and injuries often go unnoticed in the justice system. This is in stark contrast to vehicle-to-vehicle collisions which have a much higher tendency to receive thorough investigations and referrals to appropriate prosecuting authorities. Alarming, this is true even when there is no question over fault and it is clear that the vulnerable road user did nothing wrong.

LD 821 seeks to remedy this problem by improving the review process for collisions in which vulnerable road users are injured or killed. By requiring that these incidents be reviewed by a district attorney, law enforcement can focus on their investigative responsibilities and know that the district attorney will make decisions on what sanctions, if any, are appropriate for the facts of the case. This can help create more consistent outcomes, greater awareness by drivers of their legal duties relative to vulnerable users, and more security for vulnerable road users that they will be protected under the law.

We support LD 821 and encourage you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Logemann".

Alex Logemann
Policy Counsel

Alex Logeman
People for Bikes

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