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PeopleForBikes.org | 303.449.4893

March 16, 2018

RE: Support for House Bill H. B. No. 250 – Brinkman / Establish requirements for using electric bicycles

Dear Chair LaRose, Vice Chair Kunze, and Members of the Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee,

We are writing to express our support for House Bill 250, legislation that would regulate the use of electric bicycles, or e-bikes. We support HB 250 as it modernizes Ohio's laws governing the operation of e-bikes, and aligns it with national standards that have been adopted in other states, including the neighboring states of Illinois, Tennessee and Michigan.

As the principal bicycle manufacturers and suppliers in the United States, accountable for a \$6 billion industry, we support Ohio's efforts to clarify the definitions for electric bicycles and update Ohio law so that they may be used much like regular bicycles. E-bikes are the fastest growing category of bicycle sales in the nation, a trend we expect to continue. As this category of bicycles expands, clear rules for e-bikes in Ohio's traffic laws are critical for businesses in our industry and our customers.

E-bikes are designed to behave like a regular bicycle, just easier to pedal through the assistance of a small electric motor. As a new and clean-technology option, their widespread use in Ohio can bring the pleasure and freedom of bicycling to its residents and visitors with no compromise in consumer safety. E-bikes offer new opportunities for transportation, commuting, and recreation that are healthy and environmentally friendly.

Without HB 250, Ohio's legal framework is outdated, and does not provide e-bikes with an obvious classification in the state's vehicle code. HB 250 modernizes provisions of Ohio law by defining the three types of electric bicycles on the marketplace. It also eliminates confusion surrounding their use by clarifying what rules apply to these devices and where they can be ridden. This will encourage the safe and uniform use of e-bikes by providing common sense rules for their operation.

The federal government has done its part in providing a framework definition of e-bikes. In 2002, federal law was amended to distinguish bicycles with low-speed electric motors (the Class 1, 2, and 3 e-bikes defined in HB 250) from motorcycles, mopeds, and motor vehicles. For the purposes of federal law, e-bikes are consumer products that are regulated identically to traditional bicycles.

As of March 2018, eight states have adopted laws defining the three classes e-bikes within their traffic statutes (identically to HB 250): Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, Tennessee, Utah, and Washington. An additional 22 more states have older laws that provide a definition for an e-bike and treat them as a bicycle.

HB 250 is an important step for Ohio in clarifying the law surrounding the use of e-bikes. It will also align its traffic laws with federal law, and policies in other states. We urge you to support this bill and advance it out of committee.

Sincerely,



Larry Pizzi
Chair, Electric Bicycle Committee
Bicycle Product Suppliers Association (BPSA)



Jenn Dice
Vice President, Business Network + Government Relations
PeopleForBikes

The work of the BPSA and PeopleForBikes on electric bicycle policy is supported by the following companies:

Accell North America
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Brose
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