

Christopher Larsen
1021 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

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Re: Support for HB 2690 - Bicycle Yield Law

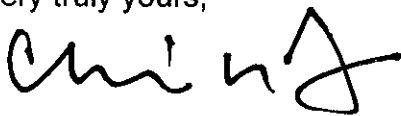
Dear Legislative Committee Members and To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of House Bill 2690 which would permit bicyclists to treat stop signs like yield signs when safe to do so.

I am currently employed as Judge Pro Tem for the Multnomah County Circuit Court, but this letter is written in my individual capacity and not as a member of the judiciary. During my five years as a judge, I have presided over hundreds of traffic violation trials and have substantial experience in traffic law and safety issues. I, along with other community safety experts and advocates, created the Share the Road Safety Class, a non-profit traffic law and safety education class designed to educate all users of the roadway cited for certain traffic violations. The Share the Road Safety Class has received considerable local and national attention as a model for a traffic law enforcement and education program designed to increase public education of traffic law and safety issues in order to reduce traffic violations and improve community safety.

During the course of considering HB 2690, I have learned that the State of Idaho has had a similar law in effect since 1982, which has resulted in no appreciable increase in traffic crashes or injuries. It is my view that bicyclists need not be required to come to a complete stop for a stop sign when it is otherwise safe to slow to a safe and reasonable speed for existing conditions. HB 2690 would allow bicyclists to proceed slowly through a stop sign at a safe speed thereby creating more efficient vehicle travel without compromising public safety. HB 2690 mirrors current law for yield signs found in Oregon Revised Statute 811.260(12) and does not replace current law that requires all vehicles to use due care when operating any vehicle on our public right of ways. I support HB 2690 because it is a reasonable change to current law that will still require bicyclists to slow and yield the right of way to all vehicles when safety requires and removes the legal prohibition from the practices already followed by a majority of bicyclists.

Very truly yours,



Christopher Larsen