



The League of Michigan Bicyclists

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LMB Legislative Priorities (2009 – 2010)

- **Give Michigan Road Cyclists a Brake**
Support: Senate Bills 529 and 530 (GEORGE)
House Bills 4958 (KNOLLENBERG) and 4959 (LELAND)
- **Driver Training Bicycle Safety Component**
Support: Senate Bill 531 (GEORGE)
House Bill 4960 (LELAND)
- **Cell Phone / Texting Ban While Driving**
Support: House Bill 4362 (ROCCA)
House Bill 4369 (POLODORI)
House Bill 4394 (GONZALES)
- **Complete the Streets**
Become a Complete Streets Champion
Support the Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Complete Streets Agenda
- **Stop the Raid on Act 51**
Protect Non-motorized Funding

Free LMB Publications

- ***What Every Michigan Bicyclist Must Know***
A safety manual for all Michigan's bicyclists.
- ***Michigan Ride Calendar***
LMB annually publishes and distributes 50,000 Ride Calendars, listing over 150 Michigan bicycle tours and events.
- ***Michigan Bicyclist Magazine***
LMB's quarterly membership publication.

To request additional publications contact LMB Associate Director John Lindenmayer at 1-888-642-4537 or jlindenmayer@LMB.org.



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Give Michigan Road Cyclists a Brake

Support: **House Bills 4958 (KNOLLENBERG) and 4959 (LELAND)**
Senate Bills 529 and 530 (GEORGE)

Action

The League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB) again asks the Governor and Michigan Legislature to:

- **Enact the same penalties for any traffic violator who commits a moving violation that injures or kills a bicyclist as for injuring or killing a farm-vehicle operator, i.e.:**
 - **Imprisonment for not more than one year or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both, for injuring a bicyclist (a misdemeanor).**
 - **Imprisonment for not more than 15 years or a fine of not more than \$7,500.00, or both, for killing a bicyclist (a felony).**
- **Make “Safe Routes to School” more than a slogan by making it clear that it is not acceptable to injure or kill a student — or any bicyclist.**

Issue

Rising energy prices and concerns about health, fitness and the environment have increased bicyclists on the roads. Motor vehicles and bicycles must share the road. Motorists' increasingly aggressive driving will only increase bicyclist injuries and deaths.

More bicyclists are reporting “road rage” by motorists. The same penalties should apply to drivers who injure or kill bicyclists as to drivers who injure or kill drivers of similarly slow-moving farm vehicles (who are much less vulnerable than bicyclists).

Convicted drivers can serve as little as days or months for seriously injuring or killing a bicyclist. Judges and prosecutors have few tools for controlling aggressive or reckless drivers. Specific penalties for injuring or killing a bicyclist will deter drivers from endangering bicyclists.

Facts

- 2,188 Michigan bicyclists were involved in motor-vehicle crashes, 1,760 were injured and 17 were killed in 2007 alone. – Source: *Office of Highway Safety Planning*
- Bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers but, because they (like farm vehicles) are usually slower than other vehicles, impatient drivers endanger bicyclists lawfully using the roads. This legislation highlights the need for motorists to share the road safely with bicyclists and deters unsafe driving near bicycles.
- The penalties in this legislation give prosecutors and judges additional flexibility in charging and punishing offenders. They are consistent with those established by Public Act No. 103, Public Acts of 2001, for drivers who injure or kill a farm-vehicle operator.

For More Information

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Driver Training Bicycle Safety Component

Support: **Senate Bill 531 (GEORGE)**

House Bill 4960 (LELAND)

Action

The League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB) asks the Governor and Michigan Legislature to:

- **Require Michigan drivers education to include classroom instruction on the laws pertaining to bicycles and emphasize awareness of the operation of bicycles on the streets, roads, and highways of this state.**

Issue

Drivers and bicyclists are safest when they share the road and follow the same traffic rules. Both have the same rights to be on the road and the same obligations. Drivers and bicyclists should observe speed limits, stop at traffic lights and stop signs, signal when changing lanes, yield the right-of-way where mandated, and maintain safe distances from all vehicles, including bicycles.

However, Michigan's drivers education program does not require new drivers to be educated about bicyclist's rights and responsibilities on the roadways. This leads many incompletely educated motorists to insist incorrectly — and too often violently — that bicyclists belong on sidewalks. Angry motorists regularly threaten cyclists both verbally and physically. Hundreds of Michigan bicyclists are injured or killed each year in automobile/bicycle collisions. Failing to include a bicycle-safety curriculum in the state drivers education program endangers the lives of all roadway users.

Objectives

- To encourage drivers to share the road with bicyclists.
- To reduce car/bicyclist fatalities and injuries through bicycle-awareness training for new drivers.
- To improve new drivers' understanding of safe bicycling and bicyclists' legal right to use Michigan roads.

Facts

- Every year, crashes with motor vehicles kill hundreds of bicyclists on America's roadways and injure thousands more.
- 2,188 Michigan bicyclists were involved in motor-vehicle crashes, 1,760 were injured and 17 were killed in 2007 alone. – Source: *Office of Highway Safety Planning*
- Drivers education and training can significantly reduce common, dangerous driver errors.
- Michigan has over seven million licensed drivers.
- Michigan requires **no** drivers education for drivers 18 or older.
- Driving tests are not administered by the Department of State, but by private third-parties.
- Michigan's Graduated Driver Licensing program **does** require drivers under age 18 to complete 24 hours of in-class instruction, six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction, and four hours of observation. This provides ample time for instruction in bicycle safety and sharing Michigan's roadways safely with bicyclists.

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Driver Cell Phone / Texting Ban

HB 4362 (ROCCA), 4369 (POLODORI) and 4394 (GONZALES)

Action

The League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB) asks the Governor and Michigan Legislature to:

- **Ban the use while driving of:**
 - cell phones (including hands-free);
 - text messaging;
 - all other portable electronic devices;
- **Remove the “secondary action” language in both HB 4369 and 4394 that makes enforcement of this prohibition contingent upon another traffic infraction.**

Issue

LMB endorses the efforts of the National Safety Council to ban cell phone use while driving. On behalf of the approximately two million Michigan bicyclists, LMB supports the passage of HB 4362 (ROCCA), 4369 (POLODORI) and 4394 (GONZALES).

Bicyclists and other vulnerable roadway users — such as pedestrians, children, the elderly and those who use mobility devices — deserve protection from inattentive drivers. No one should be injured or killed because of avoidable distractions.

Driving requires full concentration on the road. Drivers who use cell phones are much more likely to be in an accident. When bicyclists are involved, they tend to be killed. **Using a hands-free cell phone while driving is just as dangerous as using a hand-held phone.**

While LMB supports all three bills, we **oppose** the “secondary action” language in both HB 4369 and 4394 that makes enforcement contingent upon another traffic infraction. Police should not have to find a burned-out taillight before stopping a distracted driver from injuring or killing one more bicyclist or pedestrian.

Facts

- Talking on *any* type of cell phone while driving quadruples the risk of an accident, and is equivalent to driving legally drunk (a blood-alcohol content of .10). (*1997 New England Journal of Medicine examination of hospital records and 2005 Insurance Institute for Highway Safety study linking crashes to cell phone records.*)
- There is no difference between the cognitive distraction of hand-held and hands-free devices. (*Simulator studies at the University of Utah.*)
- Cell-phone use contributes to an estimated six percent (636,000) of all crashes, 330,000 injuries, 12,000 serious injuries and 2,600 deaths each year. (*Harvard Center of Risk Analysis.*)
- Eighty percent of crashes are related to driver inattention. Although some other activities may be more dangerous, drivers use cell phones more often and longer, making cell phones the #1 source of driver inattention. (*Virginia Tech 100-car study for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.*)

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Complete the Streets

Action

The League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB) asks the State of Michigan to:

- **Design and build State roadways to accommodate *all* public right-of-way users safely, including bicyclists, pedestrians, people with mobility aids, motorists, and transit users of *all ages and abilities*.**
- **Require all MDOT employees involved in planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of the State transportation system to consider fully the needs of non-motorized travelers.**
- **Require all recipients of Act 51 Funds to adhere to the state's "Complete Streets" policy (see first bullet, above).**

Issue

The public right-of-way, our roads, should be designed and built for safe travel by everyone. Complete Streets laws and policies require that the safety, interests and convenience of all users, including motorists, pedestrians, transit users, bicyclists and those who travel with mobility aids be considered in the design and construction of transportation projects.

Fifty percent of metro-area trips are three miles or less, and 28 percent are less than one mile, yet 65 percent of even the shortest trips are by car. Incomplete streets are barriers to driving less, partly because they make it unpleasant and dangerous to walk, bicycle, or take transit.

Facts

- Governor Granholm's Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan (HKHM) initiative identified Complete Streets as an essential objective in combating the alarming childhood obesity epidemic in Michigan. HKHM is actively seeking Complete Streets champions within the Legislature.
- Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Representative Doris Matsui (D-CA) recently introduced the Complete Streets Act of 2009 in the U.S. Senate and House, to ensure that federal transportation infrastructure investments provide safe travel for Americans whether they are driving, bicycling, walking, or taking public transportation.
- Complete Streets policies have been adopted in more than 80 jurisdictions across the United States, including California, Illinois, and dozens of cities and counties. In Michigan, the city of Jackson has adopted a Complete Streets resolution and the cities of Lansing and Flint are actively working towards their own local policies.
- In addition to LMB and the Michigan Environmental Action Council, a wide range of organizations including AARP, YMCA, National Association of Realtors, the American Council of the Blind and many others have lined up behind the measure. These organizations see the benefits Complete Streets offer on issues ranging from the obesity epidemic to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to providing inexpensive transportation alternatives in tough economic times.
- We need to provide for the one-third of Americans who do not drive — many of them elderly, poor, or young. Without walking, biking, or transit, they have no mobility.

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Stop the Raid on Act 51 Non-motorized Funding

Action

The League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB) asks the Governor and Michigan Legislature to:

- **Stop all attempts, by whatever means, to divert mandated 1% non-motorized funding.**
- **Reaffirm Michigan's thirty-one-year-old commitment to mandate 1% of the Michigan Transportation fund to non-motorized transportation.**
- **If possible, increase funding for these most energy-efficient of all transportation modes as ways to cut Michigan's and America's "oil addiction."**
- **Ensure that the same legal share of federal "Stimulus Funds" from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act be used for non-motorized transportation.**

Issue

Since 1978, Michigan's Act 51 has mandated spending at least 1% of the Michigan Transportation Fund on constructing or improving non-motorized services and facilities.

Today, with a global economic crisis, and the world faced with inadequate energy, more and more people are turning to non-motorized transportation alternatives — not by choice, but by necessity.

Unfortunately, the County Road Association of Michigan wants "flexibility" to take away non-motorized (pedestrian and bicyclist) road users' 1% mandated funding.

Facts

- In 2007:
 - Act 51 funds totaled almost one billion dollars.
 - Counties received \$628,000,000
 - Cities and villages received \$359,000,000.
- One percent (1%), almost ten million dollars:
 - Pays for a number of on-street facilities, such as bike lanes and wide shoulders
 - Could fund even more campaigns to protect the safety of cyclists on Michigan roads, or
 - Could fund a massive public-education effort.

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