

TNR CYCLING CLUB INC.

HOME OF CFT-SINAS DRAMIS LAW CYCLING TEAM

September 19, 2016

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee,

Capital Fund Title/Sinas Dramis Law bicycle club strongly supports the bills seeking protection for vulnerable roadway users and addressing related concerns about driver's education and motor vehicle/bicycle interaction. We strongly urge you to vote in favor SB1029, SB1030, SB1076, SB1077, and SB1078.

Capital Fund Title/Sinas Dramis Law bicycling club was established in 2012 to promote Lansing area cycling. More than 60 members from four counties ride in excess of 1500 miles per week on area roads, enjoying solo rides and participating in team group events, charity rides, and races. Sadly, we have also suffered injury and loss of teammates while engaged in these activities on public roads. Protections and provisions provided by these bills will reduce our vulnerability and improve overall safety for all users of Michigan's roadways.

Michigan lags behind other states in protecting bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users. In 2015 bicycle fatalities in Michigan increased a startling 57%. Sadly, 2016 is on track to be even more tragic, with 18 bicycle fatalities as of August 31. By supporting these bills, this committee is in the unique position to prevent future senseless tragedies.

That starts by improving driver's education. Michigan does not spend adequate time teaching new drivers about bicyclist's rights and how to safely share the road. As Complete Streets policies continue to grow in popularity, more and more bicycle lanes and other dedicated bicycle infrastructure are being installed in communities across Michigan. This makes it more important than ever to educate drivers on how to safely interact with cyclists on our changing roads. Failing to include bicycle safety in Michigan's driver's education curriculum endangers the lives of all roadway users. Dedicating a specific amount of time will help to alleviate confusion among motorists and reduce common crashes.

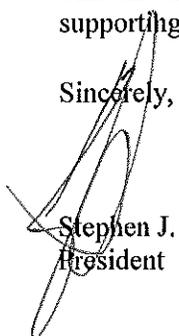
One of the most common types of bicycle/auto crashes involve collisions where a motor vehicle strikes a bicyclist while attempting to pass when traveling in the same direction. The Office of Highway Safety and Planning reports that 55% of bicyclists involved in crashes in 2015 were "going straight ahead" prior to the crash. Creating clearer guidelines for how motorists should interact with cyclists on the roads is essential. A five foot passing standard is the minimum distance sufficient to ensure safe passing and to help prevent a

driver from striking a cyclist if the cyclist were to fall in the travel lane. Michigan is one of only eleven states without a law specifically requiring motorists to pass bicyclists safely.

Lastly, Michigan law already has enhanced penalties for drivers who injure or kill construction workers, children in designated school zones, and operators of slow-moving farm vehicles. It is time to recognize bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users as inherently vulnerable roadway users and give them similar protections. Pedestrians and bicyclists made up 21% of all roadway fatalities in 2015, a disproportionately high number considering they only accounted for 1.42% of all traffic crashes. Enhanced penalties will further increase the standard of care for drivers around non-motorized roadway users.

Capital Fund Title/Sinas Dramis Law cycling team is encouraged by the extensive public support for these bills and the wide bipartisan support among the legislature. Thank you in advance for your leadership in supporting these common sense actions.

Sincerely,



Stephen J. Smith
President

Capital Fund Title