

**SENATOR FLOYD PROZANSKI
CHAIR, SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
OREGON STATE CAPITOL, S-415
900 COURT STREET NE
SALEM, OREGON 97301**

My name is Sean Severson and I am a resident of Beaverton, Oregon. I have lived in Oregon for the past 10 years and previously resided in the state of California for 17 years. I am an avid motorcycle rider and have been riding on and off road for over 30 years. I have been very involved in the motorcycle community having participated in racing, volunteering for the Oregon Motorcycle Road Racing Association, participated in training and track days at Portland International Speedway, and also entered and raced a number of off road motocross events in California.

While living in California, I experienced a commute of all commutes traveling 180 miles round trip every day from San Joaquin valley where I lived to the bay area where I worked. Anyone that has traveled or lived in California understands what kind of traffic there can be in metropolitan areas. Friday afternoons are an absolute nightmare. For quite a number of years before I had purchased a street motorcycle of my own, I watched as motorcycles would cruise effortlessly between the miles of stopped traffic. I have to admit, at first it bothered me these guys were 'cutting in front of me'. But I soon realized that this wasn't the case. If all these motorcyclists were in cars, it would take me even longer to get where I am going. I purchased a new motorcycle and quickly joined the motorcyclists filing through miles of traffic. It was a very relaxing and liberating experience. Stress levels and commute times dropped and I was getting 45mpg!

Over the next decade I saved countless hours and fuel, as well as other drivers time and fuel, by riding safely between cars in stopped traffic. Over the years and miles that I have practice this, never did I myself have an accident or witness an accident caused by lane splitting. It also became more apparent to me that riding between cars in stopped traffic was safer than in the lane in stop and go traffic. The first thing a motorcyclist does in a situation where quick braking is required, is to look in his rear view mirrors to see if the motorist behind him is either stopping or unwittingly barreling down on them towards impact. If lane splitting, a motorcyclist simply moves between lanes and continues proceeding forward with no concern for what the vehicle behind them may or may not be doing. This also makes the motorcyclist safer with 100% of their concentration being directed towards what is in front of them.

There is generally plenty of room in between lanes of traffic to proceed safely through. However, occasionally some wider vehicles can obstruct the passage of the motorcycle. As a motorcyclist I was grateful to the many drivers in California who were aware of my presence and intent to pass and gave me a little extra room. Over the years that this practice has been in effect, drivers have become accustomed to motorcyclists proceeding between lanes and are generally courteous in giving us extra space. I usually respond with a wave or thumbs up. I think it is my duty as a motorcyclist to also be courteous when lane filtering.

In 2005 my family and I move back to Oregon to be closer to friends and family and to escape the 180 mile round trip commute I had been experiencing for so long. I brought with me my love for riding motorcycles and looked forward to a 19 mile commute. It seemed like it would be a piece of cake.

I soon learned of the wrath of Portland traffic, commuting from Beaverton to Milwaukie, most of that time spent on Highway 26 through the tunnel in and out of Portland. I also very quickly learned that riding my motorcycle wasn't quite as fun and appealing as it had been in the past. No longer able to easily pass through stopped traffic, I found myself sitting in bumper to bumper traffic, pumping my clutch and getting nowhere any quicker than if I was in my car or truck. I also had to concern myself again with the dangers of being rear ended in this traffic. It didn't take long for the benefits of riding my motorcycle to be outweighed by the dangers of sitting in traffic and the lack of time savings. Weather is obviously a factor more in Oregon, but I found myself preferring to just sit in a climate controlled, 17mpg vehicle than sit exposed in traffic, even if my motorcycle gets nearly 3 times the gas mileage.

In the 10 years since moving to Oregon I have only put roughly 5000 miles on my motorcycle, where in the previous years in California I averaged almost double that per year. The use of my motorcycle had been greatly reduced by lack of time savings and the dangers of riding in a lane of slow traffic. In 2012 my fears were realized when on Highway 26, in bumper to bumper traffic, I was rear ended by a woman travelling approximately 50mph. The accident destroyed her car and insurance called my truck a total loss. Had I been travelling on my motorcycle, I would have been stopped, in the lane, and been rear ended. This type of impact could have proved fatal.

This is why we need Lane Filtering. Most importantly it moves motorcycles out of the most prevalent and dangerous crash zone. In addition, it encourages the use of fuel and space saving vehicles. Most motorcycles get 2-3 times the fuel mileage of vehicles. Scooters can save even twice as much as motorcycles.

For the safety and promotion of motorcycling, I strongly urge the Committee to recommend passage of SB694.

**SEAN SEVERSON
BEAVERTON, OR.**