

544 E. Main St.
Hillsboro, Oregon 97123
April 25, 2017

House Committee on Transportation Policy

I urge you to vote against this bill on the grounds that this will reduce the capacity of all multi-lane, high speed limit roads, and because it will sometimes be impossible to comply with these provisions.

Is the Legislative Fiscal Office really sure about the minimal expenditure impact? Wouldn't this bill reduce the capacity of all freeways, requiring ODOT to build more lanes to accommodate traffic volume? Where ODOT has deemed that traffic volume requires that a road have two lanes in each direction, they will now have to add third lanes, since this bill makes most drivers squeeze into the left lanes. Even that lane adding seems silly, since if everyone is going at the speed limit (and, of course, no one is going faster than that), everyone will have to be in the rightmost two lanes, still making the left lane a waste of asphalt, because no one could legally pass (drivers would have to speed to pass, and they would never break that law).

This bill has no provision for a driver's inability to leave the left lane because of a lack of a gap in the adjacent lane. At the north end of downtown Portland there is what will become an unuseable entrance ramp to Sunset highway, because it leads to the left lane. When I am there, I go the maximum speed allowed by law, and I can't move over a lane because there are no gaps between vehicles. When I can see an approaching gap in my rearview mirror, it reaches some car behind me first, and that driver moves into it so he can pass me (at an illegal speed). My choices will be to stay put and break this law or to speed up and break the speed limit law.

There is nothing inherently unsafe about a driver in one lane passing a driver in the lane to his left. That's why it is legal, and it is done routinely. What is dangerous is a left lane driver closing in on a car in front of him, then squeezing into a small gap between that car and a right lane car that he has barely passed. However, that is the fault of the impatient driver doing the squeezing, not the fault of the left lane driver that he is passing.

Admit that the true purpose of this bill is to facilitate speeding.

Kathryn A. Iverson