



February 5, 2026

Mayor

Lauren Kleiman

Mayor Pro Tem

Noah Blom

Council Members

Michelle Barto

Robyn Grant

Joe Stapleton

Sara J. Weber

Erik Kenneth Weigand

The Honorable Diane Papan
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 4420
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 1557 (Papan) – Vehicles: Electric bicycles
City of Newport Beach – Notice of Support**

Dear Assemblymember Papan,

On behalf of the City of Newport Beach, I write to express our strong support for AB 1557, which seeks to refine the definition of electric bicycles under California law. This proposal represents an important step toward achieving the regulatory clarity essential for both consumers and manufacturers of electric bicycles.

AB 1557 amends the existing legislation by specifying that an electric bicycle is to be defined not only by the capacity of its motor to operate fully with pedals but also by establishing the motor's peak power must not exceed 750 watts. This clarification is crucial to address ambiguities that have previously hindered law enforcement and compliance measures and is a direct policy recommendation from the 2025 Mineta Institute of Transportation study on e-bike safety.

As electric bicycles become more common in California, it is important to ensure riders operate safely, so as not to endanger themselves or pedestrians on shared pathways. As the state aims to uphold commitments to reducing carbon emissions and bolstering sustainable transportation options, clear regulations are vital. This bill supports these goals by ensuring the standards are straightforward, thus promoting safer streets and paths for California residents.

A key concern lies with the fact that young riders often lack the maturity and experience to handle high-power vehicles. Electric bicycles capable of exceeding 750 watts can reach dangerous speeds much quicker than conventional bicycles, increasing the likelihood of accidents resulting from loss of control. These incidents can lead to severe injuries or fatalities, particularly in urban

environments where traffic congestion and pedestrian density present additional hazards. Much of California's existing infrastructure is not yet designed to safely accommodate the speed and volume of high-powered electric bicycles, creating conditions for accidents. Without stringent power restrictions, cyclists can inadvertently pose a threat not only to themselves but also to pedestrians and other road users.

Implementing a cap on peak motor wattage aligns with best practices seen in motor vehicle regulations, where power limitations are a standard procedure to ensure user safety. More so, adapting these standards for electric bicycles reaffirms our commitment to safeguarding the well-being of young Californians against accessible high-speed technology.

For these reasons, the City of Newport Beach is pleased to support AB 1557.

Sincerely,

Lauren Kleiman



Mayor
City of Newport Beach

Cc: Newport Beach City Council