

FOULSTON

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

822 S. KANSAS AVENUE, SUITE 200
TOPEKA, KS 66612-1203

Gary L. Robbins, MA
Governmental Relations Consultant
Non-Lawyer

garyrobbinsconsulting@gmail.com
Phone: 785-640-2651

January 25, 2022

Thank you, Chair Proehl and members of the House Transportation Committee, for the opportunity to appear in support of Senate Bill 101. I am Gary Robbins Government Affairs Consultant for the Foulston Law firm. We are representing PeopleforBikes as part of a national effort to create uniform state laws on the use of electric bicycles.

If this bill sounds familiar, it is because you heard it last session. We want to thank the committee for passing House Bill 2263 last session. Unfortunately, it didn't reach the House floor. Senate Bill 101 has the same language as House Bill 2263 passed by this committee. It has the amendment worked out with the League of Kansas Municipalities. Senate Bill 101 passed the Senate 36-3.

Senate Bill 101 is straightforward, and the goals are simple: bring Kansas' law for electric bicycles into alignment with modern technology and uniformity with other state laws. Since this committee addressed this issue last session, there are now 36 states who have passed this legislation.

Electric bicycles look, ride, and are equipped like regular bicycles, but have a small electric motor that provides assistance to the rider. Electric bicycles have been sold in the United States for more than 20 years, but their recent growth has been much more rapid.

Electric bicycles offer substantial health, recreation, and transportation benefits for many types of people. They are easy and convenient to use for short trips. They enable older or mobility impaired riders to continue exercising, and they level the difference in abilities between different types of riders.

Today in Kansas, electric bicycles are treated like bicycles within our traffic laws. This bill will maintain that structure. However, existing Kansas law deviates from other federal and state electric bicycle laws with respect to how an electric bicycle is defined, how powerful its motor can be, and how its speed is governed. This legislation will harmonize Kansas' definitions for electric bicycles with those existing laws.

In summary, this legislation is a small but an important update to Kansas' traffic rules that will align our statutes with modern technology and other U.S. laws and urge you to pass Senate Bill 101.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Robbins