

# MOVING ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAWS INTO THE FUTURE

**PEOPLEFORBIKES** is working to update state laws governing the use of electric bicycles across the U.S. In many states, electric bicycles lack a specific vehicle classification and it is unclear how they are regulated. They may be interpreted to fall within terms primarily aimed at combustion engine vehicles such as mopeds or scooters. Our goal is to clearly define electric bicycles and provide sensible roles for their use.

## The objective of this initiative is to ensure that:

- » Outdated vehicle regulations are updated to reflect technological advances.
- » Low speed electric bicycles are regulated similarly to traditional bicycles.
- » Consumers and retailers are not confused about their state's electric bicycle law.
- » The public is encouraged to take advantage of the benefits that electric bicycles offer.

More than 45 states have incorporated electric bicycles into their traffic codes and regulated them similarly to traditional bicycles. Fewer than 5 states still have outdated laws that lack a specific classification for electric bicycles.

## ELECTRIC BICYCLE RULES FOR THE ROAD

### MODEL LEGISLATION

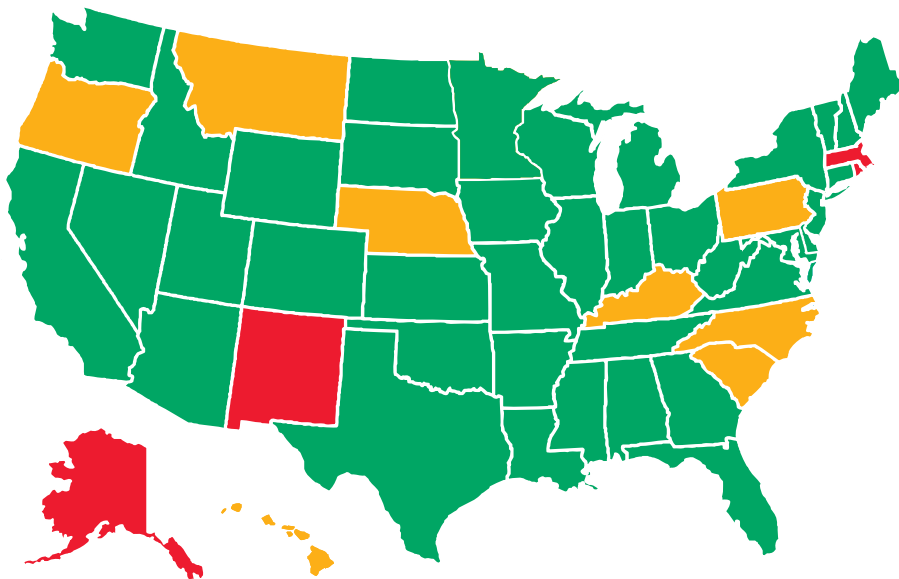
- » States that have enacted PeopleForBikes' model law, which defines and regulates three classes of electric bicycles within states' motor vehicle codes, gives riders similar rights and duties to that of traditional bicycle riders.

### ACCEPTABLE

- » Regulated as a bicycle
- » Passengers allowed
- » No age minimum
- » No licensing or registration required
- » Can use existing bike infrastructure

### PROBLEMATIC

- » Regulated as a moped or motor vehicle
- » Confusing equipment + use requirements
- » Confusing licensing + registration requirements
- » Confusing access to bike infrastructure



## THREE CLASS ELECTRIC BICYCLE MODEL:

- » **CLASS 1:** Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20mph.
- » **CLASS 2:** Bicycle equipped with a throttle-actuated motor, that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20mph.
- » **CLASS 3:** Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 28mph.

In the interest of safety, local governments would be allowed to restrict, regulate or prohibit the use of electric bicycles in their parks, on paths and on trails. In the absence of local ordinances, Class 1 and Class 2 electric bicycles would be allowed on paths and trails; while Class 3 electric bicycles would only be allowed on roadways. The electric bicycle class model also allows local agencies to permit electric bicycles on paths or bikeways where they are traditionally not allowed, in the event that the alternative route is considered hazardous. This is a local jurisdictional decision.



## These regulatory updates would also mean that:

- » Electric bicycles are not subject to the registration, licensing, or insurance requirements that apply to motor vehicles.
- » Helmets are required for riders of Class 3 electric bicycles.
- » Persons under 16 years of age are not be able to ride a Class 3 electric bicycle (unless as a passenger).
- » All electric bicycle manufacturers must apply a standard label to each electric bicycle specifying its type and wattage to help law enforcement agencies determine if an electric bicycle has access to a particular bikeway.
- » The same rules of the road apply to both electric bicycles and human powered bicycles when it comes to speed, proper passing, local traffic laws, speed limits, equipment and other ordinances.

## WITH AN ELECTRIC BICYCLE, BICYCLISTS CAN RIDE MORE OFTEN, FARTHER, AND FOR MORE TRIPS.

Electric bicycles are designed to be as safe as traditional bicycles, do not compromise consumer safety, and benefit bicyclists who may be discouraged from riding a traditional bicycle due to limited physical fitness, age, disability or convenience.

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