



2009 Legislative Agenda

During the 2009 session of the Oregon State Legislature, the BTA is working with legislators, local governments and other advocates to pursue improvements and refinements to Oregon laws that affect bicycling.

Check here frequently as updates will be posted as they become available. As the legislative session moves along we may ask you to send an email or make a phone call in support of one of these laws - your support is crucial!

Funding for Non-Motorized Transportation

The BTA is working hard on a number of fronts to increase the amount of funding for bicycle infrastructure and programs.

Over the course of the last year, we worked with stakeholders from multiple sectors on the Governor's Transportation Vision Committee to create a [series of recommendations](#) for the Governor to use in creating a complete transportation package for the 2009 Legislative session. We didn't get everything we wanted, but that is often the case when you are working on a collaborative effort with a number of competing interests trying to come up with a balanced set of recommendations. That said, we support the Governor's package and hope you will too.

The [Governor's Jobs and Transportation Act](#) (JTA) increases the required spending on bicycle facilities from 1% to 1.5% and transfers \$44 million of flexible federal transportation dollars from road building to multi-modal transportation. This Bill also contains language regarding building a more sustainable transportation system that links smart land use and transportation and adopting a least-cost planning model that would compare multimodal options for solving transportation problems and determining what would be the cheapest solution.

The Bill had a hearing before the House Transportation Committee on March 2nd and 6th and the BTA testified in support. It is now in the hands of a select committee of Legislators from the House and Senate to work out any changes. Though a date has not been determined for the release of the modified package, it is expected to come out some time in early April.

We will be working to increase the required spending amount bike a ped projects and get as much of the flexible dollars as possible to go to bicycle facilities.

There are also several Bills that have been introduced independently to increase the minimum spending on bike and ped projects. These include:

[HB2971](#) – Increases the minimum percent from 1% to 2%. The chief sponsors of this Bill are Rep. Bailey and Rep. Dembrow and is cosponsored by Rep. Cannon and Rep. J. Smith at the request of the BTA. A hearing on this Bill was held before the House Transportation Committee on March 18th and 25th and the BTA [testified](#) in support.

[HB3137](#) – This bill repeals the dedication of specified moneys to state highway modernization program and establishes priorities for highway projects. It also increases allocation of State Highway Fund moneys for footpaths and bicycle trails from 1% to 2%. This was sent to the House Transportation Committee hearing on the Bill has not been scheduled.

[SB292](#) - Increases the minimum percent from 1% to 2%. This Bill was introduced at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Judiciary for the BTA. It has been referred to the Senate Business and Transportation Committee but has not been scheduled for a hearing.

[SB943](#) – Increases the minimum percent from 1% to 3%. The chief sponsor of the Bill is Sen. Verger and is cosponsored by Senators Burdick, Morrisette and Prozanski and Representatives Barnhart, Clem, Olson and Read. It has been referred to the Senate Business and Transportation Committee but has not been scheduled for a hearing.

In addition, we will be working with various stakeholder groups to pass [HB2902](#) and [SB635](#) that would dedicate lottery funds to non-motorized transportation corridors. The program would be modeled after the successful Connect Oregon program that funds air, marine, rail, and transit projects.

[HB2902](#) has Rep Bailey as its chief sponsor and Representatives Barnhart, Bruun, Clem, Esquivel, Olson, Read and Whisnant as cosponsors. It has been referred to the House Transportation Committee.

[SB635](#) has Senators Monroe and Atkinson as chief sponsors and Senators Burdick, Morse, Prozanski and Telfer as cosponsors. It has been referred to the Senate Business and Transportation Committee.

Vehicular Homicide_

[HB3399](#) A person who causes the death of another person when operating a vehicle with a suspended license or no license at all, without insurance, or when impaired could be found guilty of Vehicular Homicide, which is a Class C felony. This Bill's chief sponsor is Rep. Read and is cosponsored by Representatives Barker and Riley and Senators Bonamici and Hass at the request of Mary O'Donnell, widow of Tim O'Donnell. The Bill has been scheduled for a hearing on April 3 before the House Judiciary Committee. Several amendments are being considered to address concerns raised by Legislative Counsel.

Idaho Stop Law

[HB2690](#) The BTA is seeking a change in Oregon law that would allow bicyclists to treat stop signs as yield signs, slowing down and safely rolling through if they can see that no other auto, bike or pedestrian traffic is approaching. In 1982, the Idaho legislature passed a nearly identical law, and since then Idaho has experienced no increase in bicycle crashes. Idaho is the only state with this law, but several other states, including California and Montana, are considering it.

The Idaho Stop law would make it much easier for bicyclists to avoid large streets with high auto traffic by biking on quiet residential streets, which often have stop signs placed at every-other intersection. Today, most bicyclists in Oregon towns and cities are forced to choose between slow, time-consuming, but quiet and safe streets; and fast, efficient, but more dangerous and stressful roads. Read more about this proposal [here](#).

This Bill's chief sponsors are Rep. Bailey and Senators Atkinson and Prozanski and is cosponsored by Representatives Cannon, Dembrow, Galizio and J. Smith. It was introduced at the request of the BTA. A hearing was held on March 18th and the BTA [testified](#) in support of the Bill. A work session has not yet been scheduled.

School Siting

Current law does not require school districts to consider transportation costs when deciding on locations for new facilities. This promotes the idea that siting schools away from population concentrations is more cost effective than locating them within communities. The decision to locate a school on the edge of a community increases the reliance on costly busing or parents having to drive their children to school. Locating schools within communities creates a community asset that is accessible to more of the population, increases walking and biking to school, and reduces the environmental damage caused by motorized vehicles. The BTA will be working with the [Center for Innovative School Facilities](#) to address laws that will change this situation.

[SB276](#) This Bill was introduced at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Judiciary for the BTA. It has been referred to the Senate Education and General Government Committee but has not been scheduled for a hearing.

Drivers' Education

Recognizing that driver education and training is insufficient at the time of licensing and nonexistent at the time of renewal, the BTA is seeking a change in statute that would require an undetermined amount of behind the wheel training by a certified trainer. At renewal, drivers would be required to pass a multi-question test on line or at a DMV office in order to refresh their understanding of existing laws and inform them of changes to the law.

[SB267](#) This Bill was introduced at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Judiciary for the BTA. It has been referred to the Senate Business and Transportation Committee but has not been scheduled for a hearing.

Crash Reports

Minor changes to the current Oregon Traffic Accident and Insurance Report form would clarify reporting requirements for bicyclists and encourage bicyclists and pedestrians to file reports when they have been involved in a crash. Increased reporting will assist law enforcement and traffic engineers in identifying dangerous locations and behaviors, and in developing solutions.

[SB291](#) This Bill was introduced at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Judiciary for the BTA. It has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee and a hearing was held on February 3. The BTA [testified](#) in support of the Bill.

Comments or questions? Contact BTA Executive Director Scott Bricker, (503) 226-0676 x14, scott@bta4bikes.org.