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August 21, 2024

The Honorable Damon Connolly
Member, California State Assembly
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249

RE: AB 1778 (Connolly) Vehicles: electric bicycles.
Notice of SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Connolly,

The City of Manhattan Beach is pleased to support AB 1778 (Connolly), which would establish the “Marin Electric Bicycle Safety Pilot Program” and authorize a local authority within the County of Marin, to adopt an ordinance or resolution that would prohibit a person under 16 years of age from operating a class 2 electric bicycle or require a person operating a class 2 electric bicycle to wear a helmet. Additionally, the bill would make a violation of an ordinance or resolution that is adopted an infraction punishable by either a fine of \$25 or completion of specified requirements such as an electric bicycle safety and training course.

With the increasing popularity of e-bikes as an alternative mode of transportation and recreation, there has been a corresponding rise in safety concerns and regulatory ambiguities surrounding their use. Currently, there is a lack of standardized safety training and education programs specifically tailored to e-bike riders, leading to potential risks for both riders and other road users. Additionally, the absence of clear regulations regarding age restrictions and licensing requirements for e-bike operators has created confusion and inconsistencies in enforcement practices.

With the increased use of e-bikes in Manhattan Beach, the City began partnering with Manhattan Beach Unified School District and local bike shops to educate riders about the importance of following the rules of the road while operating a bicycle or e-bike. However, these efforts are only one part of the solution to address bicycle safety and regulations were needed.

At the September 5, 2023 meeting, the City Council adopted an urgency ordinance amending the Manhattan Beach Municipal Code (MBMC) establishing a speed limit, safety and operational standards, and location restrictions for bicycles, e-bikes, and motorized bicycles. The City Council also

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established fines associated with violations of this ordinance that are increased with each subsequent violation within one year.

While e-bikes have become popular and are a great way to reduce our reliance on cars, pollution, and traffic, they aren't toys and can be dangerous when not operated properly. The City has put teeth behind our commitment to safety, and the Manhattan Beach Police Department has been enforcing the ordinance, in the absence of sensible statewide regulations.

The City supports legislative efforts that enhance regulations to address electric bicycle use and promote public safety. Should a pilot program become successful, the City hopes the programs can expand and that additional cities can benefit from enhanced regulations.

For these reasons, the City of Manhattan Beach supports AB 1778 (Connolly).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Franklin". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and "F".

Joe Franklin
Mayor
City of Manhattan Beach

Cc: City of Manhattan Beach City Council
The Honorable State Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi
The Honorable State Senator Ben Allen
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Jeff Kiernan, League of California Cities Public Affairs Manager
League of California Cities, cityletters@calcities.org
California Contract Cities Association