



**ADDRESS**  
3442 Wai'ālae Ave., Suite 1  
Honolulu, HI 96816

**PHONE**  
808-735-5756

**EMAIL**  
bicycle@HBL.org

## **HBL Comments on 2025 Hawai'i Legislation related to Electric Bicycles**

January 24, 2025,

Aloha Members of the 2025 Hawai'i Legislature:

This year the Hawai'i Legislature has introduced at least 18 different bills proposing to regulate electric bicycles (variously referred to as e-bikes, electronic bicycles, and e-bicycles), as well as additional bills affecting the bicycling community. Clearly these devices have seen exponential widespread adoption and there is a high level of concern for public safety. Increasing rates of serious injuries and traffic fatalities, especially for vulnerable road users, has driven this concern.

The Hawai'i Department of Transportation noted a 10% statewide increase in deaths in 2024 from the prior year. Honolulu EMS reported they responded to 206 injuries related to e-bike and e-motorcycle riders from January thru November 2024. On Hawai'i Island, traffic fatalities nearly doubled in the past year. At the Hawai'i Bicycling League (HBL), we reviewed 22 years of statewide data and found an annual average of four deaths of people riding bicycles during this time. However, since 2022, we have seen an approximate 50% increase for these traffic fatalities.

Our strongest recommendations for new legislation are focused on safety, driven by data, and based on expertise developed over 50 years as Hawai'i's leading bicycling advocacy organization and most recently as a member of the E-Mobility Working Group convened by the Director of Honolulu's Department of Transportation Services (DTS). HBL has a long track record of partnership with DTS, Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT), and stakeholders across the islands to deliver educational programming and informational resources for everyone from keiki to kupūna.

Newly proposed legislation should emphasize proven safety measures like education, infrastructure improvements, and vehicle safety technology, as well as leverage existing statutes such as Complete Streets and Vision Zero plans. Further, HBL wants to support individuals and families across Hawai'i to have more affordable and cleaner transportation options.

To improve safety on our roadways and increase cleaner and more affordable transportation options, HBL intends to support proposed state legislation that addresses the following four primary topics:

- Updated definitions for electric bicycles to follow three-class system
- Define high speed electric devices to distinguish from electric bicycles, as well as electric personal mobility devices.
- Expanding access, compensation, and formulas for e-bike rebates
- Update various mentions in statute with regards to 'bicycles with motors' to exclude e-bikes

Hawai'i Bicycling League is opposed to legislation that:

- Uses outdated or inconsistent e-bike definitions such as *15 U.S. Code § 2085* which was enacted more than 22 years ago
- Adds or increases age restrictions for people riding bicycles
- Inserts licensing and insurance requirements for people riding bicycles
- Treats low-speed electric bicycles differently than traditional bicycles

These strategies are unproven as regards safety and negatively impact people who rely on bikes, especially individuals and families who cannot afford to own a car. Moreover, as the State strives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled using combustion engines (as required in the court mandated Navahine v. HDOT settlement agreement) our laws must prioritize solutions that help people choose walking and biking more. With the start of a new federal administration that's actively hostile to climate change mitigation measures and green transportation, it's incumbent on Hawai'i to pick up the slack and move more aggressively toward our climate goals.

HBL plans to submit formal testimony as these various bills are scheduled for hearings and encourage our members and constituents to share their experiences with respective committees of the Legislature.

Please reach out should you have any questions or need additional information before bill hearing dates.

Executive Director Travis Counsell can be reached by email at: [travis@hbl.org](mailto:travis@hbl.org).

Advocacy Director Eduardo Hernandez can be reached by email at: [eduardo@hbl.org](mailto:eduardo@hbl.org).

Our office telephone is (808) 735-5756.

Resources and additional background information:

[2025 Legislative bills being monitored by HBL](#)

Electric Bicycle Education from HBL: [hbl.org/ebikes](http://hbl.org/ebikes)

Electric Bicycle PSAs by HBL with HDOT support: <https://hbl.org/ebikevideos/>

National Resources from People For Bikes: <https://www.peopleforbikes.org/topics/electric-bikes>

National Resources from the League of American Bicyclists:

<https://bikeleague.org/2024-state-legislative-roundup-e-bike-registration-more/>

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Travis Counsell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Travis Counsell

Executive Director

Hawai'i Bicycling League