



more, better & safer bicycling

TO: Chair Shanley and members of the House State Government and
Elections Committee
RE: Support for H7789

Bari Freeman
Executive Director

Date: March 2, 2026

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Dear Chair Shanley and Honorable Members of the State Government and Elections Committee,

I am writing regarding H7789 (Boylan, Furtado, Potter, Serpa, Speakman, Kazarian, Caldwell, Tanzi, and Handy), which would make changes to the laws pertaining to electric bicycles.

We are grateful that these issues are being considered legislatively and make the following recommendations to ensure that the resulting legislation is accessible and shareable by educators, law enforcement, and those it intends to make safer.

- 1) Regarding restricting operation of an e-bike to those over 16 years of age:
 - Currently in state code 31-3-2.2, the restriction is buried in a vehicle registration law.
 - This bill proposes locating the age restriction in a definition of e-bikes. The definition section does not otherwise include rules related to the defined vehicle.
 - Ideally, the law should exist in a freestanding statute in the section entitled Operation of a Bicycle and should clearly state: **Electric bicycles shall not be operated by a person under the age of 16 years.**
 - We recommend that the same adjustment be made to the bill's recommendations regarding Personal Mobility Devices.

2) Further we recommend against defining Personal Mobility Devices as bicycles.

3) We recommend that 28mph in these definitions refer to "assisted speed" not "maximum speed" as it is not uncommon for an unpowered bicycle to exceed 28mph on a downhill slope.

We are currently working on these refinements at the local and state level together with our Chief of Police and through him with the Association of the Police Chiefs of Rhode Island, and request that you pause on finalizing these updates so we can share with you the result of these efforts to align language across ordinances.

We are prepared to assist in this process as requested.

On behalf of the board, staff, and participants of Bike Newport, thank you for your consideration, and always for your service,


Bari Freeman, Executive Director

Where's RI's E Bike Law?

Rhode Island § 31-3-2.2.

Registration of motorcycles, motorized bicycles, and motorized tricycles.

Where?!

Every motorcycle, motorized bicycle, and motorized tricycle owned by a resident of this state shall be subject to the registration provisions of chapters 3 — 9 of this title whether the motorcycle, motorized bicycle, or motorized tricycle is operated or drawn upon a highway within this state or upon private property. An electric personal assistive mobility device (“EPAMD”) and electric motorized bicycles shall not be required to register under this chapter; **provided, however, that an EPAMD and/or electric motorized bicycles shall not be operated in this state by a person under the age of sixteen (16) years.**

“Clean up bill”



Establish a separate statute under 31 -19.7 Electric Bicycles, reading:

“Electric motorized bicycles shall not be operated in the state by a person under the age of sixteen (16) years.”