

SUPPORT [HB1266](#)

Topic: Omnibus Bicyclist Safety Act

Bill Patron: Delegate Delegate Rodney T. Willett

OVERVIEW:

To improve the safety of people bicycling, this bill:

- (1) Allows riders to treat stop signs as yield signs in limited circumstances (Safety Stop);
- (2) Allows two-abreast (side-by-side) bicycling without restriction, except on two-lane roads with a speed limit greater than 30 MPH.
- (3) Clarifies that whenever a travel lane is too narrow for a motor vehicle to safely pass a person bicycling within that same lane, a) the general directive to ride as far to the right as safely practicable does not apply and b) overtaking motorists may not overtake a person bicycling within that same lane.

Reasons to Support:

- Improve the safety of people bicycling.
- The Safety Stop is a proven safety measure recommended by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
 - A Delaware study found a 23% reduction in crashes involving people bicycling at intersections in the 30-months after implementation of the Safety Stop.
 - The Safety Stop is the law in ten states (ID, DE, AR, OR, WA, UT, ND, OK, CO, MN) and the District of Columbia.
- Riding two abreast:
 - Makes it easier for drivers approaching from behind to see and react appropriately to people bicycling ahead;
 - Allows a parent to ride beside their child, shielding them from passing vehicles and allowing them to approach potential dangers with the child;
 - Discourages drivers from unsafely passing people bicycling within the same lane, when that lane is too narrow for passing safely;
 - Is lawful without restriction in 23 states and the District of Columbia
- To facilitate drivers overtaking on two-lane roads, the bill requires two-abreast riders to not unreasonably impede traffic on such roads when the speed limit is 35 MPH or higher.
- Adds an objective lane-width standard for when people bicycling are not required to ride as far to the right as safely practicable to make the law easier for everyone to understand.
- Safer bicycling will encourage more people to bike, which will reduce transportation-generated greenhouse gasses, improve public health, and make the entire transportation system safer.



Virginia Bicycling Federation

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This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker. VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.