
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TRANSPORTATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Electric bicycles have become widely available
2 for personal transportation and are popular among citizens of
3 all ages. In March 2023, there were five thousand three hundred
4 registered electric bicycles. This figure is potentially higher
5 considering that many owners do not register their bikes,
6 especially if they are purchased online.

7 In December of 2023, the department of transportation
8 reported nine bicyclist fatalities, the highest recorded number
9 of deaths among bicyclists in Hawaii to date. Furthermore,
10 electric bicycles can seriously injure pedestrians in a
11 collision and operators are at risk from motorists who do not
12 expect a small, silent, and motorized device riding near them.
13 The legislature finds, in the wake of a recent surge in
14 ridership accidents, it is critical to address the unsafe
15 operation of electric bicycles.

16 The purpose of this Act is to:



- 1 (1) Prohibit the operation of an electric bicycle on
- 2 highway, street, roadway, or any other areas
- 3 designated for motor vehicles;
- 4 (2) Prohibit reckless or unsafe operation of an electric
- 5 bicycle; and
- 6 (3) Prohibit the removal of a manufacturer- or factory-
- 7 installed speed limiting device from an electric
- 8 bicycle.

9 SECTION 2. Section 291C-145, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended to read as follows:

11 **"§291C-145 Riding on roadways and bikeways.** (a) Every
12 person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at a speed less than
13 the normal speed of traffic moving in the same direction at such
14 time shall ride as near to the right-hand curb, on the edge of
15 the roadway, or on the shoulder off of the roadway as
16 practicable, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle
17 or one proceeding in the same direction; except under any of the
18 following situations:

- 19 (1) When preparing for a left turn at an intersection or
- 20 into a private road or driveway, except where
- 21 prohibited by official traffic-control devices;



1 (2) When reasonably necessary to avoid conditions
2 (including but not limited to fixed or moving objects,
3 vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, animals, surface
4 hazards, or substandard width lanes) that make it
5 unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb, on the
6 edge of the roadway, or on the shoulder off of the
7 roadway. For purposes of this section, a "substandard
8 width lane" is a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle
9 and a vehicle to travel safely side-by-side within the
10 lane; or

11 (3) When a roadway is designated and signposted to carry
12 traffic in one direction only and has two or more
13 marked traffic lanes, a person operating a bicycle may
14 ride as near to the left-hand curb, on the edge of the
15 roadway, or on the shoulder off of such roadway as
16 practicable.

17 (b) Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall ride in
18 single file; provided that where the flow of traffic is
19 unimpeded, riding two abreast upon bicycle lanes and bicycle
20 paths shall be permitted when such lane or path is of sufficient
21 width to allow riding two abreast unless otherwise prohibited by



1 rule or ordinance adopted by the director of transportation or
2 by the counties.

3 (c) Whenever a usable bicycle lane has been provided on a
4 highway, any person operating a bicycle at a speed less than the
5 normal speed of traffic moving in the same direction at such
6 time shall ride within such bicycle lane, except that such
7 person may move out of the lane under any of the following
8 situations:

9 (1) When overtaking and passing another bicycle, vehicle,
10 or pedestrian within the lane or about to enter the
11 lane if such overtaking and passing cannot be done
12 safely within the lane;

13 (2) When preparing for a left turn at an intersection or
14 into a private road or driveway; or

15 (3) When reasonably necessary to leave the bicycle lane to
16 avoid debris or other hazardous conditions.

17 (d) No person operating a bicycle shall leave a bicycle
18 lane until the movement can be made with reasonable safety and
19 then only after giving an appropriate signal in the event that
20 any vehicle may be affected by the movement.



1 (e) No person shall operate or ride a bicycle within a
2 bicycle lane in any direction except that permitted of vehicular
3 traffic traveling on the same side of the highway. Upon all
4 bicycle paths of sufficient width and providing for two-way
5 movement of bicycle traffic, bicycles proceeding in opposite
6 directions shall pass each other to the right.

7 (f) The director of transportation by rule and the
8 counties by ordinance may with respect to bikeways under their
9 respective jurisdictions restrict or prohibit the use of such
10 bikeways by mopeds.

11 (g) No person shall ride a bicycle equipped with a motor
12 on any sidewalk, highway, street, or roadway. The counties may,
13 by ordinance, post bicycle lanes and bicycle paths to prevent
14 persons riding a bicycle equipped with a motor from using them.

15 (h) Any person violating paragraph (g) shall be subject to
16 the following penalties:

17 (1) A fine of not more than \$500 for a first violation;

18 (2) For a violation that occurs within one year of a prior
19 violation, a fine of not more than \$1,000 and
20 completion of a traffic safety education program; and



(3) For subsequent violations, a fine of not more than \$2,000, suspension of privilege to operate an electric bicycle in the State for a period of six months, and completion of a traffic safety education program."

SECTION 3. Section 291C-143, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§291C-143 Riding on bicycles. (a) A person propelling a bicycle shall not ride other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat attached thereon.

(b) No bicycle shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed and equipped.

(c) No person shall operate an electric bicycle in an unsafe manner, including but not limited to:

(1) Reckless or negligent operation that endangers the operator, pedestrians, or other road users;

(2) Operating at speeds exceeding the posted speed limit;
and

(3) Failing to adhere to traffic signal, signage, or rules applicable to bicycles.

(d) Any person violating paragraph (c) shall be subject to the following penalties:



(1) A fine of not more than \$250 for a first violation;

and

(2) For a violation that occurs within three months of a
prior violation, a fine of not more than \$500.

(e) For purposes of this section:

"Electric bicycle" means a two- or three-wheeled cycle with
fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than seven
hundred fifty watts that provides propulsion assistance.

"Electric bicycle" includes a low-speed electric bicycle, as
defined in title 15 United States Code section 2085."

SECTION 4. Chapter 286, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
amended by adding a new section to part IV to be appropriately
designated and to read as follows:

"§286- Speed limiting devices. (a) No person shall:

(1) Remove a manufacturer- or factory-installed speed
limiting device from an electric bicycle; or

(2) Operate an electric bicycle, in which the
manufacturer- or factory-installed speed limiting
device was removed from the electric bicycle.

(b) For purposes of this section:



1 "Electric bicycle" means a two- or three-wheeled cycle with
2 fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than seven
3 hundred fifty watts that provides propulsion assistance.

4 "Electric bicycle" includes a low-speed electric bicycle, as
5 defined in title 15 United States Code section 2085.

6 "Speed limiting device" means a device or function in an
7 electric bicycle capable of limiting the maximum motive power-
8 controlled speed at which the electric bicycle may operate."

9 SECTION 5. The department of transportation shall develop
10 a traffic safety education program and a public awareness
11 campaign to educate the public about general electric bicycle
12 riding safety, rules of the road, and laws pertaining to
13 electric bicycles, no later than twenty days prior to the
14 convening of the regular session of 2026. The department shall
15 inform individuals of the applicable traffic code, safety
16 information, and penalties for violations at the time of
17 registering an electric bicycle.

18 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
20 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
21 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year



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1 2026-2027 for implementation and administration of a traffic
2 safety education program and a public awareness campaign.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
4 of transportation for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 7. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
6 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
7 begun before its effective date.

8 SECTION 8. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 9. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

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INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 17 2025



H.B. NO. 486

Report Title:

Electric Bicycles; Roadways; Speed Limiting Devices; Penalties

Description:

Prohibits the operation of an electric bicycle on highway, street, roadway, or any other areas designated for motor vehicles. Prohibit unsafe operation of an electric bicycle. Prohibits the removal of a manufacturer- or factory-installed speed limiting device from an electric bicycle. Requires the department of transportation to develop a traffic safety education program and a public awareness campaign. Appropriate funds.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

