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House of Representatives

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

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MEMORANDUM

To: All House Members

From: Representative Seth Grove
196th Legislative District

Date: March 21, 2012

Subject: Proposed Legislation: Defining E-Bikes

I soon will be introducing legislation creating a new and separate definition in the Vehicle Code for electric-assist bicycles in order to clarify that electric-assist bicycles are not motorized vehicles and therefore are not subject to vehicle registration, inspection, titling or insurance requirements.

Currently, Pennsylvania law classifies electric-assist bicycles as motorized pedalcycles (mopeds) and requires them to be registered, insured and titled. We are only one of five states that still regulate electric-assist bicycles to this degree. Consequently, those who own an electric-assist bicycle or those who are thinking about purchasing one find themselves in a Catch-22 situation. They cannot currently register the bike because it has no Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), yet several owners have been cited by law enforcement because the bikes have not been registered. Clearly, some clarification is needed.

Under my legislation, a new definition is established in the Vehicle Code: "Pedalcycle with Electric Assist." Included in this definition are bicycles equipped with an electric motor not exceeding 750 watts/1 hp, weigh not more than 100 pounds, are capable of a maximum speed of not more than 20 mph, and have operable pedals. My legislation also includes an age limit, stipulating that no person under the age of 16 shall operate a pedalcycle with electric-assist.

There are ecological, energy, economic, and health benefits derived from the use of electric-assist bicycles. Those benefits explain why more and more of these bicycles are being sold, and then operated on Pennsylvania roadways. Because of this fact, it is imperative that Pennsylvania correctly classify electric-assist bicycles and exempt them from the requirements of motor vehicles. That is the intent of the legislation I plan to introduce.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Lisa Burkholder at 783-2655 or via email at lburkhol@pahousegop.com. Thank you for your consideration.