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Esteemed Members of the Legislature,

My name is Geoffrey Knight and I am the Planning Director with the City of Harrisburg, presenting on behalf of the City's Planning Bureau.

I have reviewed the proposed legislation, and feel that it is an important step in acknowledging, authorizing, and regulating e-scooter devices within Pennsylvania, thereby affirming Pennsylvania as a state that embraces innovation, sustainability, and active transportation. The inclusion of e-scooters in the spectrum of transportation modes should expand the constituency of those who value active, sustainable, and safe transportation options, and will allow communities to diversify their transportation mode splits. To that end, I believe that many of the proposals in this legislation that apply to e-scooters should similarly be expanded to include e-bikes (at least pedal-assist e-bikes) so that these similar devices are effectively regulated in the same manner.

With respect to the proposed changes in Section 1, I believe that including "an electric low-speed scooter" as an exception to the definition of a "motor vehicle" is reasonable raises the question of whether other transportation modes, such as "pedal-assist e-bikes" or even "throttled e-bikes" should likewise be included as they are similar devices. They are used in much the same way for the same types of mobility and their current classification as "motor vehicles" imposes regulations on bicyclists that would not apply to "e-scooters" despite these similarities.

Regarding the application of the changes in Section 3 of the proposed legislation, it appears to prohibit both operation of e-scooters on sidewalks, which is reasonable, but also on parking such devices on sidewalks. Parking should be permitted on sidewalks, or at least not prohibited, unless the State also includes language that encourages the placement of safe, designated e-scooter parking in the cartway. If e-scooters cannot be parked on sidewalks, or on private property without consent of the owner, then by process of elimination, they must be left in the cartway, which exposes both users and the devices to potential injury.

Overall, I feel the proposed legislation would be a positive step in advancing active transportation modes in the State of Pennsylvania.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.