



Bicycle Access Council

News & Digest

www.BicycleAccess-PA.org

December 2011

Hello Members and Supporters of the Bicycle Access Council.

It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania!

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FAILS TO ACT ON TWO KEY BICYCLE BILLS...

And adjourns until January. The Bicycle Safety Bill, **HB 170**, was to be voted on by the full Senate having passed out of the House and Senate Transportation Committees. The Senate did not bring HB 170 up for a vote before adjourning. Likewise, there was no action taken on **HB 864** that reauthorizes the Pedalcycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PPAC), which has been meeting quarterly without being able to recognize new memberships of citizen appointed members in a different format with new Bylaws.

HB 170 was promised to be "fast tracked" in January 2011 as the amended version of HB 1110 from the last legislative session (2009-2010). The original bill, HB 2689, from the 2007-2008 legislative session moved quickly at first and testimony was submitted in August 2008 before the House Transportation Committee by BAC Executive Director, Joe Stafford.

HB 2689 was the work product of BAC which sought out the initial Representatives to sponsor it. By amendment (A08930) in September 2010, key elements were stripped from the original language introduced in 2008 due to PennDOT and Pennsylvania State Police objections to some portions of it. The four-foot overtaking [passing] requirement is still included.

PPAC DEBATES THE MERITS AND RAISES CONCERNS OF HB 170...

At the December 15 meeting. In a bit of a surprise discussion topic, John Schubert, long time advocate and expert witness expressed his concerns over the effects of the pending Bicycle Safety Bill, HB 170 (see above). He noted that the current bill is flawed by reinserting the "far-right" rule as it applies to bicyclists, which he and other advocates worked hard to have removed from the Vehicle Code in the mid-1990's. John opined that the general public and law enforcement agencies will misinterpret the confusing phrase "as far to the right as *practicable*" while disregarding the "unless unsafe to do so" provision. A lively discussion continued to weigh the options of the bill's future.

BAC continues to support HB 170 with expectations that its passage will be the opportunity to include updates to law enforcement in standard in-service training sessions affirming bicyclists' rights to the commonwealth's roadways — something that rarely gets much attention beyond basic training. Updates are provided to Pennsylvania State Police members and all other law enforcement entities are trained by the Municipal Police Officers' Educational and Training Commission (MPOETC).

However, BAC is open to all options to amend HB 170 in the Senate with its original elements for the best possible outcome for Pennsylvania bicyclists. Comments welcome!

BERKS COMMON PLEAS COURT RESCHEDULES HEARING...

For the driver charged with assault and harassment of a Berks County cyclist. The judge assigned to rule at the Disposition Hearing on December 6 decided to recuse himself. A new hearing date is set for January. BAC was in the court room when the announcement was made. See the September BAC News & Digest for case details.

BAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GETS SIX-FIGURE BONUS...

For ten years of service. However, all figures are Zero, so the bonus is the same as the E.D. annual salary. This is the BAC Directors' way of saying all memberships and donation are used 100% to fund the advocacy activities representing Pennsylvania bicyclists.

YEAR END DONATIONS ...

Are appreciated and tax deductible as allowed by law. BAC is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 charitable organization. A letter verifying donations is sent for amounts of \$250 or greater and for any donated amount upon request.

Dates to Remember...

2012 **PPAC Meeting dates:** March 15; May 24; September 6; December 13

2012 **March 20-23 National Bike Summit,** Washington, DC. See www.bikeleague.org
Friday, March 23, is the traditional Congressional Bike Ride around DC

Mission Statement...

The Bicycle Access Council is a non-profit advocacy organization that serves as a forum for Pennsylvania bicyclists and as an ombudsman for bicycling issues.

It is the objective of the Bicycle Access Council to make bicycling on roadways throughout the Commonwealth safe, respectable and a transportation choice by educating its members and the motoring public.

All funding for the Bicycle Access Council comes from memberships and donations. Annual membership is \$20 per year. BAC does not share membership information.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

Joe Stafford, Executive Director
Bicycle Access Council
Dallastown, PA
www.BicycleAccess-PA.org
(717) 417-1299

