



Bicycle Access Council

News & Digest

www.BicycleAccess-PA.org

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Hello Members and Supporters of the Bicycle Access Council.

It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania!

PENNSYLVANIA BICYCLE SAFETY LEGISLATION...

"...has little or no chance of passage anytime soon" according to Representative Rick Geist, House Transportation Committee Minority Chairman. "Maybe in September we'll be able to deal with it." This was his assessment given at the Pedalcycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PPAC) meeting held in Harrisburg, June 4. The probability of amendments attached to any Title 75, Vehicle Code, legislation is high according to chairman Geist. The Commonwealth budget process will overshadow most other legislation until passed.

FINDING THE LOOPHOLES IN THE LAW...

Is the purpose of another pending House Bill (HR 590) that makes provisions for bicyclists and motorcycle operators to proceed through signalized traffic controls where "bikes" are not detectable by roadway sensors—loop detectors. BAC submitted comments in January 2009 to the House Transportation Committee in support of this bill with reservations, however.

The Vehicle Code already allows for this as detailed in §3112. In summary, it says a malfunctioning traffic signal or one that does not detect a vehicle by roadway sensors may be treated as a stop sign. A full stop is required and a full light cycle must be observed before assumed to be defective or non-detecting. A vehicle turning or proceeding straight must yield to other traffic.

The reservations detailed by BAC include conflicts with bike lanes marked outside the roadway "loop" wires and left hand turn movements. It gets complicated. Education of bicyclists and motorcycle operators will need to be part of promoting this change of the statute. Placing roadway markings where "light Vehicles" are best detected now would be an improvement for all "bikes" as well as the general public and law enforcement officers who may regard cyclists as scofflaws.

BAC participated in a Loop Detector study conducted by PennDOT in 2003.

NO BONES TO PICK WITH THIS STORY...

<http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/07/01/is-bicycling-bad-for-your-bones/>

or <http://tinyurl.com/lh3lc4>

THIS NEWSPAPER GETS IT (AGAIN)...

As shown in the following editorial. *York (PA) Daily Record* June 25, 2009

Crack down on cyclist harassers

A letter to the editor recently published in the Evening Sun of Hanover [PA] is a perfect example of why legislation proposed by state Rep. Ron Miller, R-Jacobus, ought to be enacted — quickly.

Here's the letter:

On June 6, my girlfriend and I were enjoying the fair city of Hanover when a single incident tainted an otherwise enjoyable weekend.

At approximately 7 p.m., we were bicycling along Black Rock Road -- single file and respectfully tucked away in the shoulder, I might add -- when a pair of teenagers in a green BMW slowed down, intentionally swerved into our lane, laid on their horn and ran us off the road. We were uninjured but badly shaken that a couple of bad apples could be so cavalier with our lives. A few inches more, and we would have been roadkill.

Over the course of our stay in Hanover, we spent approximately \$500 on lodging and meals. Sadly, after the egregious actions of a few bad apples, we won't be returning anytime soon. -- Andre Dahlman, Bethesda, Md.

Obviously, this area has no monopoly on dangerous drivers. The situation described by the letter writer could just as easily have happened in his native Maryland.

So it might not be fair to tag the town of Hanover for the idiocy of one driver. But fair or not, that's how people form opinions about places.

And the truth is, there are a lot of bad drivers in our county who endanger and even threaten bicyclists out on the road.

It's time to crack down on such drivers who refuse to "share the road" — or at least give police the tools they need to harass the harassers:

■ House Bill 1109 specifies that any driver who knowingly maneuvers his or her motor vehicle to intimidate or harass a cyclist or pedestrian, or any driver or passenger in a motor vehicle who directs threatening gestures or language at a cyclist or pedestrian, commits a second-degree misdemeanor.

That sure sounds like those teens in daddy's green Beamer.

- House Bill 1110 establishes a minimum four-foot safe passing distance, at a reduced speed when possible, for overtaking bicycles on the highway. It also prohibits drivers from making sudden right turns in front of a cyclist proceeding in the same direction.

That sounds like a lot of drivers in this area who pass cyclists too closely and too fast, rather than slowing down for a few seconds until they can safely veer around.

Rep. Miller's York County colleagues should help push for passage of his two bills -- particularly Republican Rep. Will Tallman, who represents the Hanover area.

Let's not wait for someone to be killed before we make it clear that such dangerous harassment of cyclists will not be tolerated.

Dates to remember:

Aug 16 **Covered Bridge Metric Century, www.LancasterBikeClub.org**
BAC will be there. Stop by to say hello.

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 roads 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.



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Happy Fourth of July

