



TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES



THE BRONX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

October 8, 2019

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Re: Support for Legalization of Electric Bicycles and Electric Scooters (S. 5294-A/A. 7431-B)

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The undersigned groups respectfully urge you to sign S. 5294-A/A. 7431-B, legislation to legalize electric bicycles and electric scooters in New York State, when the legislature sends it to your desk for your signature. E-bikes and e-scooters are safe, environmentally-friendly modes of transportation that can make cities more livable and solve last-mile transportation issues.

New York City's streets are choked with traffic that contributes to climate change and to the dual public health crises of poor air quality and traffic violence. Earlier this year you took a bold step to address the traffic crisis by leading the way on the nation's first congestion pricing plan. E-bikes and e-scooters can perfectly complement that plan – they are much safer than cars, emit no particulate matter or greenhouse gases, and are small and easily storable, making them ideal for urban areas. Electric micromobility makes moving away from cars easy for anyone regardless of age, ability, or health.

In fact, e-bikes are already used by thousands of New Yorkers, many of whom are immigrant delivery workers who rely on the speed and cost efficiency of e-bikes to make enough deliveries each day to eke out a living. Yet because the legal status of e-bikes is in doubt, these bikes are often confiscated by

police and their riders ticketed, disrupting livelihoods and exposing people who have done nothing wrong to the criminal justice system.

E-scooter share programs have been successful around the country, where they have been very successful in addressing last-mile transportation problems, where people may be too far from the nearest public transportation to travel on foot so they instead rely on for-hire vehicles, personal cars, or forgo public transportation altogether. E-scooters have demonstrated success in closing the last mile and displacing car trips in cities where they are legal.

In response to concerns raised by some elected officials, S. 5294-A/A. 7431-B does not allow shared e-scooter programs to operate in Manhattan and authorizes local governments to enact more stringent regulations where they find it appropriate. For example, this provision would allow a municipal government to require shared e-scooters to be left in designated places, thereby solving the “clutter” complaint that has been raised in some other cities.

More than 30% of New York’s greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation, making it the state’s number one contributor to climate change. While electrification and other emissions-free technology is important for cars and trucks, we cannot meet the ambitious goals that we have set for ourselves without also reducing the total number of vehicle miles traveled. These new transportation options are already displacing private vehicle trips around the world, and can do the same in New York, complementing your strong record on transportation policy. Micromobility is the future – we urge you to bring it to communities across New York State by signing S. 5294-A/A. 7431-B when it comes across your desk.

Sincerely,

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New York League of Conservation Voters

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