



From: Kasandra Griffin, Forth
Date: March 9, 2022
To: House Transportation and Environment Committee
Regarding: Supporting HB 1391, with amendment
Contact: 503-238-1799; KasandraG@forthmobility.org

Honorable Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, Subcommittee Chair Fraser-Hidalgo, and Committee Members,

Forth is national nonprofit association that advances clean and equitable transportation throughout the United States and internationally through transportation electrification innovation, advocacy, engagement, and demonstration projects.

I am here to testify in support of HB 1391, which will support Maryland's ambitious 2030 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (GGRA) Plan. We enthusiastically support tax incentives for electric vehicle purchases, which we believe are absolutely necessary for widespread adoption of electric vehicles. We are especially excited to see the addition of incentives for two and three-wheeled vehicles in this bill, because smaller vehicles improve efficiency, reduce wear and tear on roads, and use fewer materials.

We are also supporting an amendment to add "autocycles" explicitly to the potential beneficiaries (page two, line 25) and to revise Maryland's definition of "autocycle" to be more inclusive of innovative electric vehicle technology.

States across the country passed laws defining "autocycles" about seven years ago, including HB 805 in Maryland in 2016, sponsored by Del. Fraser-Hidalgo. These bills exempted users of certain three-wheeled vehicles from needing motorcycle endorsement or motorcycle helmets, where those apply. Most of the autocycle laws were based on the details of one specific gas-powered vehicle that never even made it to market, from a company called Elio.

Now, states around the country are revising their "autocycle" definitions to be more flexible about vehicle design, as more of these vehicles are electric. Many of the original bills included "steering wheel" in the definition of "autocycle," but electric vehicle manufacturers are experimenting with other steering technology to save weight and improve other design elements. For example, Tesla is making a car that is steered by a yoke, and Arcimoto is making three-wheeled electric vehicles with handlebars.

The proposed amendment to HB 1391 supports this flexibility in vehicle design. Autocycles should be defined based on safety features and/or handling, and not on specific technology. The ultimate goal is to keep people safe while making these ultra-efficient vehicles easy to afford, buy and use.

Please support this good bill, and thank you for your service.

Sincerely,


Kasandra Griffin

Kasandrag@forthmobility.org

503-238-1799



About Forth

Forth has over 150 members from across the transportation electrification ecosystem. Our members include auto manufacturers (such as Ford, GM and BMW) and charging equipment providers (such as EVgo) as well as utilities, local governments, consulting firms, nonprofits, and environmental organizations. More information is available at forthmobility.org.

Relevant Laws in Other States

States that have recently changed “autocycle” definitions to be agnostic about steering technology:

Arizona (2019)
Florida (2021)
Hawaii (2021)
Louisiana (2021)
Maine (2019)
Michigan (2018)
New York (2022)
Oregon (2021)

States that exempt certain three-wheeled vehicles from motorcycle endorsement requirements independent of steering technology

California
Colorado
North Dakota
Ohio
South Carolina
Wyoming

Other states with legislation under consideration this year

Alabama – Passed House, moving through Senate
Connecticut – Hearing 3/9/22
Georgia – Passed House and a Senate Committee
Massachusetts – Have had one hearing, now assigned to a study committee
New Jersey – Legislator drafting language now
North Carolina – Passed House, awaiting movement in Senate
Utah – Passed both chambers, on its way to the governor