



LEAGUE OF MICHIGAN BICYCLISTS

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October 29, 2019

State Representative Jack O'Malley
Chairman, House Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Chairman O'Malley and members of the House Transportation Committee:

The League of Michigan Bicyclists is neutral with regard to HB 5100, legislation to adjust Michigan's window tinting law.

Nonverbal communication is a simple and often overlooked technique to promote roadway safety between bicyclists and motorists. Cyclists are taught to ride defensively and never assume a driver sees them. Bicyclists can help ensure their presence is known to a driver by connecting with them through eye contact, a courtesy wave, or a simple head nod. Front tinted windows can create a serious safety hazard for cyclists and pedestrians as they reduce this ability to communicate.

Tinted windows also hinder law enforcement by reducing the chances of observing texting, distracted driving, or other illegal behavior that put bicyclists and other roadway users at risk. At traffic stops, tinting increases the risk for an approaching officer who cannot see into the vehicle. Tinting can also inhibit the ability of witnesses to identify drivers involved in hit-and-run collisions, which often involve bicyclists and pedestrians.

In our review of existing studies of window tinting and existing state laws, we have seen that dark window tinting has the largest detrimental effects on driver vision for older drivers (ages 60-69 in the study) and in low-light conditions. We have provided copies of these studies to Rep. Alexander.

We opposed the initial version of HB 5100, which set a maximum standard of 35% visible light transmittance (VLT) for driver-side and passenger-side front windows. We are encouraged by the current bill's move to a 50% VLT standard, and hope to see a final bill that matches the 70% standard that passed the House and Senate in 2018.

Sincerely,

Matt Penniman, Communications Director
League of Michigan Bicyclists