CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

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October 30, 2017

Dear House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:
Sent Via email: Committee Clerk cpetros@house.mi.gov and aneta@LMB.org

The City of Ann Arbor is pleased to support the bicycle safety package before this committee. We strongly urge you to vote in favor of **HB 4185, 4198, 4265, and 5003**. These bills create clear standards for how to safely pass a bicyclist and will improve driver's education in Michigan to put a greater emphasis on bicycle safety.

Ann Arbor is a bicycle friendly community that has been named by the League of American Bicyclists as *a Silver-level Bicycle Friendly City* in 2009 and 2013. With over 79 miles of bike lanes and over 900-bike parking spaces downtown, the city has been recognized since 2008 as *a Gold-Status Community* in the Promoting Active Communities Assessment; which is a state initiative that encourages active living in Michigan communities.

The City of Ann Arbor shares the goal of providing and helping citizens gain a better understanding of bicycling within the community.

- *Michigan lags behind other states in protecting bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users. Bicycle crashes and fatalities continue to rise at an alarming rate. The Office of Highway Safety Planning reports 38 bicyclists were killed in 2016 in Michigan, up a terrifying 81% from 2014. Additionally, 1,959 bicyclists were involved in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2016. These bills will help prevent future senseless tragedies.*

- *Popular Complete Streets policies mean more and more bicycle lanes and other dedicated bicycle infrastructure are being installed in communities across Michigan. Failing to include how to navigate this new infrastructure and to address bicycle safety in driver's education endangers the lives of all roadway users. Dedicating a specific amount of time will help to alleviate confusion among motorists and reduce common crashes.*

- *The Office of Highway Safety and Planning reports that 55% of bicyclists involved in crashes in 2015 were "going straight ahead" prior to the crash.*

- *A five-feet passing standard is the minimum distance sufficient to ensure safe passing and to help prevent a driver from striking a cyclist.*

- *Michigan is one of only eleven states without a law specifically requiring motorists to pass bicyclists safely.*

- *Cities all over Michigan are outpacing the State Legislature in protecting their local bicyclists. Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Ann Arbor, Portage, Oshtemo Township, and Norton Shores have all adopted five-foot passing ordinances. Battle Creek has a similar policy and Dearborn will likely soon adopt a five-foot ordinance as well. Numerous other policies are pending in other communities. A uniform statewide standard will alleviate confusion over a growing patchwork of policies.*

- *The Michigan Department of Transportation and Department of State published a joint PSA urging drivers to pass cyclists with five feet of space. It is time to codify this into state law!*

- *Grand Rapids' recent "Driving Change" campaign featured their five-foot safe passing ordinance as a basis for educating drivers in how to safely interact with bicyclists with great success. The effort resulted in an 82% reduction in fatal or serious injuries from bicycle-involved crashes.*

The City of Ann Arbor is very encouraged at the extensive public support for these bills and the wide bipartisan support among the legislature. Thank you in advance for your leadership in supporting these common sense bills.

Sincerely,

for Howard S. Lazarus
City Administrator

cc: C Taylor, Mayor
City Council Members
C Hupy, Public Services Area Administrator