

October 27, 2017

Dear House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:

As avid cyclists, my husband and I want to express our overwhelming support for the bicycle safety package before this committee. We have each had close calls with vehicles passing too close and passing dangerously around corners and at intersections. We need motorists to understand we also have a legal right to be on Michigan roads.

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.

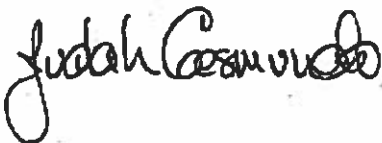
Isn't it surprising that with all the beauty there is to see in Michigan, we are only one of eleven states without a law specifically requiring motorists to pass bicyclists safely? Why do we lag behind other states in protecting bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users when crashes and fatalities continue to rise at an alarming rate? A five-foot passing standard has been determined to be the minimum distance that will ensure safe passing, helping prevent a driver from hitting a cyclist.

Cities across Michigan outpace the State Legislature in protecting 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 with numerous other policies pending in additional communities. A uniform statewide standard is imperative to alleviate confusion over a growing patchwork of policies.

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

My husband, Paul Raynes, and I are 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judah Gesmundo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judah Gesmundo

Avid cyclist and Senior Business Analyst

