



Legislative and State-wide Issues 2010-2011

The Bicycle Alliance of Washington advocates for bicyclists and a bike-friendly Washington state. This paper provides a brief summary of our legislative and State-wide issues work.

Our **Legislative Committee** is composed of representatives from supporting bike clubs and communities from all around the state. The Committee meets regularly to develop and pursue a strategy and agenda for each legislative session. Most meetings are via conference call, however an in-person meeting is usually held each spring to work on developing a recommended list of legislative and State-wide priorities for the upcoming year. Committee members are encouraged to contribute ideas & comments and share priorities & encourage action with local clubs and contacts.

Our **Professional lobbyist** knows all the players and furthers bicycling interests year-round in Olympia.

At **Transportation Advocacy Day** each year 100+ bike and transportation choices advocates journey to Olympia to meet with their legislators on bike-related legislation. For 2011, the event will be held February 10 at United Churches; please see the BAW web page for details.

We are working with environmental, health and transportation groups to refine past and develop new legislation for 2011. Especially in a bad economy, it's important to invest in efficient and safe transportation and healthy communities. Priorities for 2011:

- **Traffic safety education**—require that the driving schools attended by motorists who have received a traffic ticket teach the Department of Licensing's approved curriculum for safe driving around cyclists and pedestrians.
- **Mutual courtesy and safe passing**—clarify the laws that define safe and courteous behavior for cyclists and motorists, including legislation governing how much space motorists should give cyclists when passing alongside them.
- **Complete streets**—create a framework for a grant program to create incentives for communities that adopt a "complete streets" policy to ensure that their streets are designed and built to accommodate cycling and walking.
- **Lower speed limits**—Give communities broader authority to lower speed limits to 20 miles an hour in neighborhoods with high pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Studies in Europe have shown that lower speed limits sharply reduce injuries and death.
- **Liability**—Impose reasonable limits on the liability of communities that sign bicycle routes or produce bike maps. Currently, some communities don't mark or map routes at all because they fear they will be found liable for injuries suffered by cyclists who use the routes.
- In addition to its main priorities, the Bicycle Alliance also supports legislation to better protect vulnerable road users such as cyclists and pedestrians, require the State to include the external costs of driving when assessing projects, and provide adequate funding for cycling and walking.
- Besides the State priorities, national priorities include federal complete streets policy, fair share for safety funding, promoting bicycling and walking, and the active community transportation act.

The collaborative approach of the Bicycle Alliance gets results every year. Of the issues researched and pursued for legislation by the Bicycle Alliance in 2010, one was adopted into law: **Texting and cell phone use**: Using a hand-held cell phone while driving had been a secondary offense. This bill makes distracted driving a primary offense.

More info at: www.bicyclealliance.org