

For the committee, my name is Kerri Jones. I am 11 years old and live in Conrad, MT. My letter is in favor of SB313.

When I ride my Electric Scooter, I wear a helmet and follow traffic laws. But, just because an Electric Scooter has a motor, does not mean it is a motor vehicle. There is a bike and walk path near my house, and I love riding down it. There are columns in the middle and at the front of the path that say 'No Motor Vehicles'. If this law isn't passed, I will not be able to ride down that path almost every day.

Thank You,

Kerri Jones

Mark Jones
Conrad, Montana

I fully support having scooters classified as bicycles, my daughter Kerri has an electric scooter and it has all but replaced her use of her bicycle, she uses her scooter in a safe, responsible manner. I do not believe these devices are in any way, shape or form a motor vehicle, they are not licensed or regulated as motor vehicles and to propose that they are or should be is simply a ridiculous waste of our elected officials time when other more important matters should be focused on.

Thank you.

Montana Senate,

Hi, my name is Andrea Russell, I am 13 years old and live in the town of Conrad, MT. I am the owner of a green e-zip E500 and I was quite disappointed to hear that we are no longer allowed to ride them. I see myself as a responsible person and I do not use my scooter for "joy riding". I might also add that my scooters maximum speed is 15 mph which is usually the speed that I would ride my bike. I take part in the Conrad Swim Team and my scooter takes me to and from practice 3 times a day 5 days a week. I don't goof off when I ride my scooter and I am cautious of my surroundings. Also, when accessable, I ride my scooter on the sidewalks rather than the street. Where I live, the first 5 blocks don't have sidewalks so I ride on the side of the street. We wish that scooters are treated as equally as bicycles. Ocasionally I will also use my scooter to transport me to the location that I babysit. I would greatly appreciate it if you considered allowing me and my fellow townsfolk to safely operate electric scooters.

With Great Honor,
Andrea Russell

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~*Andy*~

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter I support of the bill to qualify low-speed battery powered scooters as bicycles. I have owned a battery powered scooter for several years. I have done research on insuring and licensing the scooter and have been told many times that it is not necessary or possible since it does not have a VIN number.

I feel that my child should be allowed to ride this scooter on city streets. By allowing her to ride the scooter in town it would it would allow her to participate in more activities and save fuel. I have previously been cited by a city police officer for, 'allowing a minor to operate a motorized vehicle on a highway'. At the time I was riding my bicycle along with her to be sure she was being safe and she was wearing bicycle safety equipment.

My husband is currently deployed with the National Guard in Afghanistan and I work full time. It is very difficult to get our daughter to all of her activities and appointments as I cannot just leave work whenever I feel like it. Keeping my children busy while their father is deployed is one of the few things that them from worrying and causing stress related issues. [↑]
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Sincerely,
Amy Krause
Conrad MT

To Whom It May Concern;

I am a parent of an extremely mature, and responsible 13 year old girl. Last year it was brought to my attention that she could no longer ride her electric scooter in town. This has been bothering myself and many others since, not to mention my daughter. She has ridden her scooter since she bought it herself after saving money for quite some time. This scooter doesn't go any faster than a bicycle (caps out at 15 mph). She has been through bicycle safety classes at school, and obeys all the rules and laws according to what she has been taught. She has never been reckless, or careless while riding her scooter, she uses it as a form of transportation. She is very active in all sports, and is going many directions at once it seems. In the summer months she is in swim team. She has 3 practices a day that she goes to. My husband works for farmers in the summer and is away from home on an "on call" basis, but most days for 12-14 or more hours a day. I, myself, have a full time job where I leave home at 6:20am, and don't return until after 4pm. During this time, she used her scooter to transport to and from her 3 swimming practices every day, as well as to go babysit when she has free time. With as much as she is involved in and doing on a regular basis, she had come to rely on her scooter as her transportation to and from places in a timely manner. I feel that these should be allowed just as a bicycle as long as they are utilized the way they are meant to be and ridden safely.

Thank you for your time,

Monica Missik

(406) 450-8341

Senate Committee on Highways and Transportation,

My name is Andrea Gouchenour. My daughter Haley bought a small electric scooter this last year. We were excited because with my husband and I working full time, it is impossible to get off work and take her all of the places that she needs to be. She was riding it in town when she was stopped by the city police and told it wasn't allowed. She was mortified that the police thought she was doing something wrong. I was sure there had to be a mistake. It is a small electric scooter. The weight limit on it is 150 lbs and it is super quiet because it is electric. It doesn't go more than about 5 miles an hour either. I did not understand why anything about it would be objectionable. I strongly support Senate Bill 313 allowing these scooters to be under the same regulations as bicycles.

Sincerely,

Andrea Gouchenour

Madame Chair and Members of the Senate Highways and Transportation Committee, for the record, my name is Sheridan Johnson. I am 13 years old and I am in the 8th grade at Utterback Middle School in Conrad.

I received my first electric scooter as a birthday present when I was 10. I now have a new larger scooter that is all metal instead of plastic but it doesn't go any faster than my little one – top speed is 15 MPH.

I use my scooter to get myself to and from the many activities I participate in. My Mom and Dad both work at the farm, 23 miles from Conrad, so they can't drop everything and make sure I'm on time for basketball, volleyball, tennis, piano lessons, swim team practice three times a day in the summer months, softball practice, and gymnastics four times a week, 12 months a year. (Of course, they do give me a ride in the winter when there is snow and ice on the ground.) I have used an electric scooter for 3 years, riding safely and respecting rules of safe biking we all learned from the Conrad Police Department in the third grade. My scooter is less than a 50 CC motor. Now, I am apprehensive about using my scooter because some people say they are like cars and need to be subject to the same laws as cars. I believe scooters are for recreation, just like bicycles. If a kid obeys the law, uses the sidewalk when there is a sidewalk available to use, wears a helmet, and doesn't mess around, they should be able to use their scooter just like a bike. Letting kids use scooters, like my fellow scooter owners and I do, is a more environmentally friendly mode of transportation to "kid" activities, too.

Electric scooters aren't the same as cars. Without SB 313, I would no longer be able to ride my scooter until I take driver's education and get a driver license, which, because I am the youngest kid in the 8th grade, won't be for another two ½ years.

Please pass SB 313 and eliminate the confusion about the law that exists for both the Police Department and us kids.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sheridan Johnson
Conrad, MT

Madame Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee,

For the record, I am Cynthia Johnson from East Conrad, MT. I rise in support of SB 313.

I became concerned about this electric scooter issue last summer when a friend's child actually received a traffic violation for riding a little electric scooter in the Conrad City limits. I did a bit of research and talked to two companies who produce small electric scooters, both for children and adults. Both manufacturers indicated they classify these modes of transportation as recreational vehicles. Their reasoning was the scooters don't have a lighting system, they have negligible horsepower, they aren't eligible for registration with any department of transportation, and they can't be insured as a motor vehicle. They also indicated that all references to safety in operation were exactly the rules of bicycle safety.

My daughter has been responsibly riding a scooter for several years. She is an exemplary student and a strict adherer to rules or regulations of any sort. You can imagine the angst being caused by confusion over the rules governing little motor scooters to a kid like that. She would never knowingly break the rules and has had several discussions about scooter safety with the local Chief of Police. He has personally commented on what a responsible child she is and when I inquired about scooter use, he didn't think there was any problem.

You have heard all of the comments about why youngsters use their scooters and why they think SB 313 is a good solution. My only wish is that I could have brought them all with me to give their testimony in person. Their concern is genuine. They are all good kids, involved in many activities, and responsible in their scooter 'presence' on public sidewalks and roadways. I would like to see scooter (both motor and manual) safety training incorporated into the voluntary programs law enforcement graciously conducts every year.

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for your selfless work and sacrifice on behalf of the people of Montana.

Please give SB 313 a DO PASS recommendation and quickly send it to the Senate.