

Offered by Councilors Breadon, Louijeune, Bok, Flaherty, Arroyo, Baker, Edwards, Fernandes Anderson, Lara, Mejia, Murphy, Worrell and Flynn



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF H.3457/S.2309, AN ACT RELATIVE TO ELECTRIC BICYCLES

- WHEREAS,* The use of electric bicycles, or e-bikes, continues to grow rapidly across the United States year after year as the electric motor used on these bicycles expands accessibility of biking to new audiences—particularly seniors, people with disabilities, and people traveling with children or transporting large loads; *and*
- WHEREAS,* E-bikes are shown to reduce dependence on single occupancy vehicles, reduce overall vehicle miles traveled, and lower aggregate carbon emissions in the transportation sector; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Under Massachusetts state law, there is no legal designation for e-bike riders, leaving ambiguity in where people are allowed to ride electric bicycles, ultimately preventing their use in bikeshare systems; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Incorporating e-bikes in the Bluebikes system would make access more equitable and reliable, particularly in low-income communities that could rely on it as another mode of public transportation; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Several other major U.S. cities, including New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Philadelphia, Seattle, and Los Angeles have introduced e-bikes in their respective bikeshare systems with great success; *and*
- WHEREAS,* According to the national advocacy organization PeopleForBikes, Massachusetts is one of the four remaining states lacking adequate e-bike regulations, joining Alaska, New Mexico, and Rhode Island with a rating labeled “problematic”; *and*
- WHEREAS,* An Act relative to electric bicycles (*H.3457/S.2309*) is a bill filed in the Massachusetts Legislature by Representatives Dylan Fernandes and Steven Owens and Senator Sal DiDomenico under consideration before the Joint Committee on Transportation, with a reporting date of April 1, 2022; *and*

WHEREAS, The proposed legislation defines electric bicycles and differentiates between low-speed and high-speed bicycles and standardizes regulations; *and*

WHEREAS, The proposed legislation would grant e-bikes the legal classification necessary for implementing them in Bluebikes municipalities, including the City of Boston, affording e-bike riders the same rights, privileges and duties as other cyclists; *and*

WHEREAS, The proposed legislation would also define e-bikes under three classifications based on power, top speed, and method of electric assist, and would ensure that a municipality, local authority, or state agency having jurisdiction over a bike path or shared-use path may prohibit the operation of any class of electric bicycle on that path if they choose to do so; *NOW THEREFORE BE IT*

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council, in meeting assembled, go on record supporting An Act relative to electric bicycles (*H.3457/S.2309*) in the 192nd Session of the Massachusetts General Court and urges the Joint Committee on Revenue to issue a favorable report; *AND BE IT FURTHER*

RESOLVED: That the Clerk of the City of Boston be, and hereby is, respectfully requested to transmit a suitably attested copy of this Resolution to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Joint Committee on Transportation, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House, the Chair of the Boston Delegation to the General Court, the presenters of the proposed legislation, as well as to the Chief of Streets for the City of Boston.

Filed in City Council: March 25, 2022