

Date of Hearing: April 9, 2018

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

AB 3124 (Bloom) – As Amended April 2, 2018

SUBJECT: Vehicles: length limitations: buses: bicycle transportation devices

SUMMARY: Authorizes an operator to equip a 60-foot articulated transit bus or trolley with a front-mounted bicycle rack that extends up to 40 inches from the front body of the bus when fully deployed and limits the handlebars of a bicycle that is being transported on such a rack from extending more than 46 inches from the front of the bus. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Authorizes an operator to equip articulated transit bus or trolley of no more than 60 feet in length with a front-mounted bicycle rack that extends up to 40 inches from the front body of the bus when fully deployed, rather than the 36 inches allowed under current law, as long as it does not affect vehicle safety equipment.
- 2) Limits the handlebars of a bicycle that is being transported on such a rack from extending more than 46 inches from the front of the bus rather than the 42 inches under current law.
- 3) Requires the public agency who wants to add these 40 inch bicycle racks to buses or trolleys to establish a route review committee comprised of four members:
 - a) One member from the public agency;
 - b) One member who is a traffic engineer and is employed by the public agency that has the largest proportional share of routes among the affected agencies;
 - c) One member appointed by the labor organization that is the exclusive representative of the bus drivers of the public agency; and,
 - d) One member from the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction over the largest proportional share of routes among the affected agencies.
- 4) Requires the committee to be appointed 30 days after the public agency proposes to install the 40-inch bicycle racks.
- 5) Authorizes the committee to include a field review of the proposed routes.
- 6) Declares that the purpose of the committee is to ensure the safe operation of the buses.
- 7) Authorizes the committee to determine, by majority vote, which bus routes are suitable for the safe operation of the buses with the 40 inch bicycle racks.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Generally limits the length of a bus to 40 feet in length and an articulated bus or articulated trolley coach to 60 feet.

- 2) Authorizes a public transit operator to equip its buses of 40 feet in length with bicycle racks that extend up to 40 inches out from the front of its buses and be loaded such that the bicycle handlebars extend up to 46 inches in front of the bus.
- 3) Authorizes a public transit operator to equip its articulated buses or trolleys of 60 feet in length with bicycle racks that extend up to 36 inches out from the front of its buses and be loaded such that the bicycle handlebars extend up to 42 inches in front of the bus.
- 4) Authorizes buses of a length of 45 feet to operate on the federal aid highway system, as defined, and allows bicycle racks that extend up to 36 inches out from the front of its buses and be loaded such that the bike handlebars extend up to 42 inches in front of the bus. In no case can the total length of the bus, the bike rack, and bikes be greater than 48.5 feet.
- 5) Requires a transit agency to establish a route review committee if it wants to operate 45 foot buses with front-mounted bike racks. The route review committee must conduct a field review of routes where the buses would travel and consult traffic engineers from the public agencies with jurisdiction over the roads that the bus routes follow. Only when a route review committee determines by unanimous vote that 45 foot buses with front bike racks can operate safely on the selected routes may the public transit agency then operate such buses on those routes. The route review committee must be comprised of:
 - a) A representative of the transit agency appointed by the general manager of that agency;
 - b) A traffic engineer from the public agency that has jurisdiction over the largest proportion of the transit agency's bus routes; and,
 - c) A representative of the bus drivers chosen by the labor organization representing the bus drivers.
- 6) Authorizes the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit), the Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT), and Gold Coast Transit to install 40-inch bicycle racks on the front of their buses, with approval of a route review committee for installation on 45-foot buses.
- 7) Authorizes Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), to operate buses up to 82 feet in length on the designated Orange Line in L.A. County, with approval of a route review committee.

FISCAL EFFECT: None, this bill is keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS: California continues to support policies to encourage more active transportation opportunities, especially as a commute alternative to driving. To that end, public transit agencies have seen increased ridership from bicyclists who wish to use transit for some portion of their trip. Transit buses are authorized to be equipped with front-mounted bicycle racks but the law varies in the allowable length of the bicycle rack for certain length buses. Bicycle racks extending 36 inches from the front body of the bus when fully deployed are typically only large enough to accommodate two bicycles. Bicycle racks extending 40 inches can typically accommodate three bicycles.

Until recently, all types of transit vehicles on the road were allowed to be equipped with two-position bicycle racks. In 2014, AB 2707 (Chau), Chapter 310, Statutes of 2014, authorized that 40-ft transit buses to be equipped with the three-position bicycle racks as long as they only extend up to 40 inches from the front of the body of the bus when fully deployed. Currently, three transit agencies in California are also authorized to install these racks on 45-foot buses. Prior to deploying the three-position racks, the transit agencies must go through a route review committee to ensure the safe operation of the buses on specific routes. For example, in January 2015 SacRT installed the three-position bicycle racks to a total of 209 vehicles in its fleet, and they had not experienced any major safety issues.

According to the author, “As state and local agencies move to attract more riders to transit to meet California’s laudable environmental and mobility goals, it is important to accommodate riders who use various modes, including bikes, to get to and from transit systems. AB 3124 will help better accommodate these riders by increasing the number of bikes that can be carried on transit buses.”

Specifically, this bill allows 60-foot articulated buses to install the three-position bicycle racks. The sponsor of the bill, the California Transit Association, explains that, “Despite the longer vehicle length, the turning radius of both vehicles is very similar due to the articulated center joint of the 60-foot vehicles. Thus, from an operating standpoint, deploying the three-position bike rack on a 60-ft bus is very similar to its current usage on a 40-ft bus. In order to ensure the longer vehicles are operating as safely as possible, this bill includes route review language requiring transit agencies, bus operators, local government, and law enforcement to collaborate before a bus can be deployed using these longer racks.”

In writing in support of the bill the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) shares what the bill would mean for their agency. “This authority would increase capacity and make it easier for cyclists to transport their bicycles on buses when they wish to use transit for some portion of their trip. With the increasing number of bicyclists in San Francisco, we want to make it as easy as possible for people to bicycle and take transit, rather than using a private vehicle. Muni’s 60-foot buses carry approximately 196,400 riders daily. These buses typically operate on the highest ridership routes including the 14-Mission, 30-Stockton, 38/38R Geary and the 49 Van Ness-Mission.” Further, “SFMTA has been testing 40-inch three-position racks since 2015, without any major complaints from transit operators or law enforcement.”

Additionally, from the customer perspective, the California Bicycle Coalition states, “Increasing bicycling and transit use, often in tandem, is environmentally, economically, and equitably responsible. The legislative authority of AB 3124 would increase capacity and make it easier for cyclists to transport their bicycles on buses when they wish to use transit for some portion of their trip.”

Previous legislation: AB 1340 (Chau) of 2015, would have prohibited bicycle racks from extending more than 40 inches from the front of the bus, rather than the front of the body of the bus. AB 1340 was referred to this committee but was not heard at the request of the author.

AB 2707 (Chau), Chapter 310, Statutes of 2014, authorized the installation of 40-inch bicycle racks on buses no more than 40 feet in length and limits the handlebars of a bicycle from extending more than 46 inches from the front of the bus.

AB 1684 (Chávez) of 2014, would have authorized the North County Transit District to install bike racks on its buses that extend 43 inches from the front body of the bus, with a route review committee required for installation on any buses exceeding 40 feet in length. AB 1684 was referred to this committee but was not heard at the request of the author.

AB 652 (Skinner), Chapter 369, Statutes of 2009, authorized AC Transit to install 40-inch bicycle racks on its buses, pursuant to a vote of a route review committee on any 45-foot buses.

AB 2488 (Williams), Chapter 376, Statutes of 2012, authorized Gold Coast Transit in Ventura County install 40-inch bicycle racks on its buses, pursuant to a vote of a route review committee on any 45-foot buses.

AB 206 (Dickinson), Chapter 95, Statutes of 2013, authorized Sac RT install 40-inch bicycle racks on its buses, pursuant to a vote of a route review committee on any 45-foot buses.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

California Transit Association (Sponsor)
Alameda-Contra Costa Transit
California Bicycle Coalition
City and County of San Francisco
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Monterey-Salinas Transit
Riverside Transit Agency
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

Opposition

None on file

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