

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Lori D. Wilson, Chair

AB 1614 (Dixon) – As Introduced January 21, 2026

SUBJECT: Vehicles: bicycles

SUMMARY: Expands existing law to require that bicycle operators and passengers be properly seated when riding on bicycle paths, as is already required on local streets and roads.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires a person operating a bicycle on a highway to ride the bicycle while seated on a permanent regular attached seat unless the bicycle was designed by the manufacturer to be ridden without a seat. (Vehicle Code section (VEH) 21204)
- 2) Require any passenger on a bicycle to also be seated on a separate seat attached to the bicycle. If the passenger is four years of age or younger, or weights 40 pounds or less, the seat shall have adequate provision for retaining the passenger in place and for protecting the passenger from the moving parts of the bicycle. Prohibits the operator from operating a bicycle with a passenger not properly seated. (VEH 21204)
- 3) Makes it a \$25 fine (\$193 with total bail and penalty schedule) to violate the above provisions (Uniform Bail and Penalty Schedule 2025 Cal. Rules of Court, rule 4.102).
- 4) Defines “highway” as a way or place of whatever nature, publicly maintained and open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel. Highway includes streets. (VEH 360).
- 5) Defines a “bicycle path” as a completely separated right-of-way designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflows by motorist minimized. (Streets and Highways Code section 890.4)
- 6) Defines “bicycle” as a device upon which a person may ride, propelled exclusively by human power, except as provided in Section 312.5, through a belt, chain, or gears, and having one or more wheels. An electric bicycle is a bicycle. (VEH 231)
- 7) Provides that a person riding a bicycle on a highway or a bicycle path to have all the rights and subject to all of the provisions applicable to the driver of a vehicle. (VEH 21200)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: Since 1963, California law has required a person operating a bicycle or a passenger to be properly seated on the bicycle. SB 527 (Kehoe) Chapter 594, Statutes of 2009, amended that section to allow a person to stand if the bicycle is designed to be ridden without a seat.

In June of 2017, a Sacramento runner was hospitalized with serious injuries after being hit by a bicyclist on a local bike trail or Class I bikeway. The bicyclist fled the scene, leaving the injured runner on the trail. The cyclist did not report the accident nor render assistance to the runner.

While California law at the time applied all the rules of the road to bicycles on highways, case law made it unclear if a bicycle path qualified as a “highway” for the purposes of the Vehicle Code. As a result, the Legislature passed AB 1755 (Steinworth), Chapter 139, Statutes of 2018, which extended all the rules of the road applicable to a vehicle to also apply to a bicycle on a bicycle path.

However, that statute did not make corresponding changes to rules that only applied to bicycles. As a result, the law requiring a person to be seated on a seat while riding a bicycle may only apply on a highway, which includes sidewalks and streets, but may not apply on a bicycle path.

According to the author, “The increased speed and accessibility of e-bikes have consistently led to higher rates of injury. More needs to be done to address the safety of e-bike riders, pedestrians and drivers. Assembly Bill 1614 will expand existing law and prohibit piggybacking on class 1 bikeways.”

The League of California Cities, *writing in support of this bill*, argues “Cities across California have invested significantly in bicycle and active transportation infrastructure, including Class I bikeways—multiuse paths that are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic and heavily used by cyclists, pedestrians, families, and recreational users. As the use of bicycles and electric bicycles (e-bikes) continues to increase, local governments are increasingly focused on ensuring that these shared spaces remain safe and accessible for all users. “AB 1614 requires riders to remain seated on bicycles that are designed with seats, which promotes stability and control, particularly on multiuse paths where riders frequently encounter pedestrians, children, and other cyclists traveling at varying speeds. Riding without proper seating can reduce control and increase the likelihood of collisions or falls.

“Cal Cities strongly support efforts that promote safe and responsible use of active transportation infrastructure and by extending well-established safety standards to Class I bikeways, AB 1614 ensures that the basic rules governing safe bicycle operation apply on these heavily used shared-use paths.”

Previous legislation: AB 1755 (Steinworth) Chapter 139, Statutes of 2018 subjects a person operating a bicycle on a Class I bikeway to all of the accident-related Vehicle Code provisions that apply to the driver of a vehicle on a highway.

SB 814 (Transportation) Chapter 311, Statutes of 2021 clarified that electric bicycles are bicycles for the purposes of the Vehicle Code.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

AAA Northern California, Nevada and Utah
Auto Club of Southern California (AAA)
California Association of Bicycling Organizations
California Orthopedic Association
City of Carlsbad
City of Huntington Beach
City of Irvine
City of Laguna Niguel

City of Los Alamitos

League of California Cities
Town of Hillsborough

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: David Sforza / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093