

Members of the Transportation Committee,

My name is Steve Brown and I live in Dover, New Hampshire. I am writing to respectfully register my strong opposition to HB 1703.

First, the proposed registration fee would place an unreasonable burden on families. Under this bill, a family of four with four bicycles would pay \$200 every year. For many parents, that added cost would be enough to make them think twice about buying or maintaining bikes for their children. At a time when we should be encouraging kids to be active, outdoors, and independent, this bill would have the opposite effect.

Second, the registration fee and associated penalties would have the unintended consequence of discouraging bicycling more broadly. Cycling provides significant public health benefits by increasing physical activity, reducing chronic disease risk, and improving mental health. It also improves quality of life in our communities by reducing traffic, noise, and pollution. In addition, New Hampshire benefits from bicycle-related tourism—people who come here to ride our roads and trails, stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants, and support our local businesses. Policies that suppress bicycling risk undercutting these health, community, and economic benefits.

Third, HB 1703 would make New Hampshire a much less bike-friendly state. That reputation matters. Many visitors specifically seek out destinations that are welcoming and safe for cyclists. If we adopt a policy that stands out as punitive and bike-unfriendly, it will hurt our tourism economy and our ability to compete with neighboring states that are investing in, not taxing, active transportation and outdoor recreation.

Fourth, the bill would fall hardest on those with the fewest resources. For some residents, especially those who are economically disadvantaged, a bicycle is not a recreational item—it is their only means of personal transportation to work, school, and essential services. Adding a recurring registration fee and the threat of penalties creates yet another financial and administrative barrier for people who are already struggling. We should not be making life more difficult for those who rely on the most affordable and sustainable form of transportation available.

Finally, I am concerned about the fiscal prudence of this proposal. Administering and enforcing a bicycle registration program would require new systems, staff time, and ongoing management. It is quite possible that the cost of implementing and running this program would approach or even exceed the revenue it generates. The fiscal note for HB 1703 offers little clarity here; it indicates that the revenues cannot be determined, which should give the committee pause. Without a clear, positive return—and in the face of serious negative social and economic consequences—this bill does not appear to be a sound use of state resources.

For these reasons, I urge you to find HB 1703 inexpedient to legislate. Instead of erecting financial barriers to bicycling, New Hampshire should be looking for ways to make it safer, more accessible, and more attractive—for families, for workers, and for the visitors who help sustain our economy.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,
Steve Brown
Dover, New Hampshire
stevebrown2217@pm.me