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January 27, 2026

The Hon. Thomas Walsh, Chairman  
Committee on Transportation  
NH House of Representatives  
1 Granite Place, Room 234  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairman Walsh and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in regard to HB1703-FN. I appreciate the sponsors initiating a conversation about transportation funding, and I am not opposed to a new fee system where bicycle owners contribute supplemental funding toward construction of bicycle facilities or other bike safety measures. However, in practice, the system proposed in HB1703 is deeply flawed in the ways described below and I ask the committee to amend or reject the bill:

- No other state does this, because it is impractical - First and most significantly, as far as I can tell no other state in the union charges an annual registration fee for conventional human powered bicycles. Multiple states charge registration fees on Class 3 and higher powered electric bicycles. Hawaii charges a one-time \$15 fee to register a bicycle in order to record serial numbers and aid in theft recovery, but not an annual fee. Bike registration requirements have been adopted by some New Hampshire towns over the years, but in many cases these have later been repealed. Durham required bike registration back in the 1970s and 1980s, but eventually dropped it because having paid the fee, residents expected actual results in terms of bike facility construction and police effort to recover stolen bicycles, but the revenue generated wasn't sufficient to address those needs. I also suspect that most law enforcement agencies would say that they have more pressing priorities than writing citations for unregistered bicycles.
- The proposed fee is disproportionate to motor vehicle registration fees - The fee of \$50/bike may seem nominal at first glance, but for say a family of four with one bicycle per person, the \$200 total would be higher than many households pay to register a car. An extra \$200 in state-imposed registration fees is not an insignificant expense for a working household, particularly considering that most households that own bicycles also own motor vehicles and already pay registration fees and fuel taxes for their cars and trucks. It seems odd that the Legislature would impose this fee on households when legislators have been unwilling to impose far lower fee increases on automobile operations or ownership that have been identified over time by the NH

Department of Transportation (NHDOT) to fund needed safety improvements for state highways and intersections.

As a comparison to automobile registration fees, I pay \$190/year (\$85 state + \$95 local) to register my 2015 Sienna minivan which has a KBB value of about \$8000; or about 2.3% of the value of the car as an annual fee. A \$50 annual reg fee on an average \$600 bicycle would be 8.3% of its value. I bet there would be an outcry if the Legislature proposed raising annual motor vehicle registration fees to 8.3% of vehicle value - that would be \$4,166/year on an average new \$50,000 pickup. A fee of \$15/year per bicycle would be more in line with registration fees paid by motor vehicle owners.

- The ownership documentation requirement is impractical - The bill requires proof of ownership to register a bicycle. Several of the bikes my family owns were purchased used and have no paperwork since bills of sale have never been a requirement or an expectation for bike purchases.
- DMV vs. town clerk - The bill requires that bicycle registration happen at Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices. What would be the cost of the added administrative burden on the DMV to handle these registrations, particularly given the ownership verification issues described above? What would this mean for wait times at DMV offices? Registering a bicycle at town hall, just like registering a car, would make more sense.

I appreciate the sponsors' intention to generate supplemental revenue to improve bicycle safety in New Hampshire; but the proposal as written sounds like a bureaucratic tangle of added paperwork for the DMV and new requirements imposed on local law enforcement. More effective approaches to engage bicycle owners in funding bicycle facilities might be: 1) a specialty license plate like the Moose Plate with proceeds targeted for rail trails or traffic separated multi-use paths; or 2) a voluntary contribution program such as the NH Hike Safe card. I urge the Transportation Committee to amend the bill to focus on those mechanisms or vote it Inexpedient to Legislate.

Thank you for your service to New Hampshire residents.

Sincerely,



Scott Bogle