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LANE FILTERING/LANE SPLITTING BY MOTORCYCLISTS
REPORT OF SUPPORT FOR HB 1102/SB 1281
February 25, 2015

In February State Representative Timothy Hill and State Senator Joey Hensley working with CMT/ABATE filed House Bill 1102, Senate Bill 1281 which would allow lane splitting and lane filtering by motorcycles to be legal in Tennessee.

What is lane splitting-lane/filtering?

Lane **splitting** is the practice and art of maneuvering your motorcycle between vehicles when traffic has slowed or stopped.

Lane **filtering** is the practice of maneuvering your motorcycle to the front of the queue at traffic lights while traffic is stopped.

Lane splitting and lane filtering are long accepted practices in Europe and Asia. In the United States, California is the only state that lane splitting is legally practiced and has been endorsed by the California Highway Patrol. In California, at the current time, there is no law for these practices in their codes, nor is there any law prohibiting the maneuvers.

The question often asked is why would any government, foreign or domestic and law enforcement allow such a thing?

The reasons are:

It reduces traffic congestion. Allowing motorcycles to keep moving translates to one less vehicle in line taking up space.

At traffic lights it translates to more vehicles getting through the intersection, because you are not sitting behind another vehicle waiting to get through the same light.

Most importantly, it reduces injuries and death of motorcyclist from rear end collisions wherever traffic is stopped.

USDOT statistics show that 40 percent of all collisions are rear end accidents.

When California motorcycle rear end accidents are compared to Texas and Florida's, where number of riders and weather are comparable, California's rear end collision rate was 30 percent lower. That is huge! Think how many motorcyclists in those other states could have avoided accidents and injuries if they too had the freedom to navigate traffic like the riders in California.

In a study by Berkley University of California, sponsored by the California Highway Patrol and funded by The California Office of Traffic Safety, it concluded that lane splitting, when done properly, was no more dangerous than everyday riding.

Here are some other interesting findings by the study.

Lane splitting riders were less likely to be rear ended by another vehicle.

Lane splitting riders involved in crashes were notably less likely to suffer a head injury if they were flowing with traffic at 30 mph or less.

Here are the highlights of CHP's guide lines for lane splitting. To view the complete guidelines log on to lanesplittingislegal.com

- 1) Travel at a speed that is no more than 10 mph faster than other traffic
- 2) It is not advisable to lane split when traffic flow is 30 mph or faster—danger increases as overall speed increases
- 3) Typically, it is safer to split between the #1 & #2 lanes than between other lanes
- 4) Consider the total environment in which you are splitting, including the width of the lanes, size of surrounding vehicles, as well road way, weather and lighting conditions.
- 5) Be alert and anticipate possible movements by other road users

The subject of lane splitting is controversial in the motorcycle community and to non-riders it appears dangerous.

Having practiced it while riding in Europe I disagree with the view that it should be prohibited and the Berkley study and the comparison of the USDOT'S own statistics, as mentioned above, backs that up.

It is time for Tennessee to allow lane splitting.

Traffic congestion in our cities is not getting less. On any given day and time the interstates in Tennessee are choked to the point that traffic can be backed up for miles.

For those of you riding American air cooled motorcycles how does that bike work when its 95 degrees and you are having to sit there not moving for more than 30 minutes, yeah not toooo good.

Lane splitting isn't for everyone. Beginning riders should get some experience before attempting lane splitting. Please note that CMT/ABATE is not asking that lane splitting be required only that it be permissible for those who choose to.

I believe that when following CHP type guidelines lane splitting could be successful in Tennessee.

If you agree and want this bill to pass you will need to contact your state representative and state senator for their support.

Mark "Yog" Moore

Concerned Motorcyclist of Tennessee / American Bikers Active Towards Education

Former State Director

Tennessee Valley Charter Director

Charter meetings are held the 3rd Sunday of the month. Contact Mark Moore for location

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