

This bill:

- 1) Prohibits a person operating a bicycle on a Class I bikeway from riding in any way other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat, unless the bicycle was designed by the manufacturer to be ridden without a seat.
- 2) Prohibits a person from riding as a passenger on a bicycle while on a Class I bikeway unless they have a separate attached seat.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Purpose of the bill.* According to the author, “[t]he 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. By bridging the existing gap in law and prohibiting “piggybacking” on Class 1 bikeways, AB 1614 creates consistency within existing law and improves the safety of all riders, pedestrians and drivers.”
- 2) *Legal operation of a bicycle.* Since 1963, California law has required a person operating a bicycle and their passengers to be properly seated on the bicycle, unless the bicycle is designed to be ridden without a seat. For the most part, it is illegal to transport another person on the back of a bicycle unless they are in an attached seat. This practice is sometimes known as “piggybacking” and often involves a bicycle passenger sitting on a bike frame or rack behind the rider. Current law explicitly prohibits this practice on highways and local streets and roads. In an effort to further prevent unsafe riding, this bill extends this prohibition to include Class 1 bikeways, commonly known as bike paths or bike trails.
- 3) *AB 1614 closes a loophole.* Under this bill, the requirement to be properly seated while biking would be expanded to include biking on Class 1 bikeways. Class 1 bikeways provide a completely separated right-of-way designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflows by motorists minimized. This bill applies to any bicyclist—including both e-bikes and traditional bikes. A bicyclist cited for improper riding could face a \$25 fine (totaling \$193 with court fees and penalties included) for violating the provisions of the bill.

Proponents argue riding properly seated on bicycles improves stability and control and reduces the risk of crashes. They emphasize the importance of a more controlled ride on multi-use paths where riders frequently encounter pedestrians, children, and other cyclists traveling at varying speeds.

Fundamentally, clarifying that bicyclists’ rules of the road always apply—regardless of the type of road—may improve riders’ understanding of, and compliance with, those rules.

RELATED/PREVIOUS LEGISLATION:

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

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 527 (Kehoe, Chapter 594, Statutes of 2009) – Prohibited a person from operating a bicycle on a highway if that person is riding other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat attached to the bicycle, unless the bicycle was designed by the manufacturer to be ridden without a seat.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday, June 3, 2026.)

SUPPORT:

- California Orthopedic Association (source)
- AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah
- American Academy of Pediatrics, California
- Auto Club of Southern California (AAA)
- California Association of Bicycling Organizations
- City of Carlsbad
- City of Fillmore
- City of Huntington Beach
- City of Irvine
- City of Laguna Niguel
- City of Los Alamitos
- City of Mountain View
- City of Redwood City
- City of San Mateo
- League of California Cities
- Town of Hillsborough

OPPOSITION:

None received.

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