

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 1167 (Blakespear) – As Amended July 1, 2026

Policy Committee: Transportation

Vote: 15 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: Yes

Reimbursable: Yes

SUMMARY:

This bill, among other things, refines the legal definitions of electric bicycles (e-bikes) and other e-bike-like vehicles, imposes related labeling and disclosure requirements on the sale of such vehicles, expands false advertising prohibitions, and provides law enforcement with new enforcement and reporting powers and duties.

More specifically, this bill, among several other things:

- 1) Expands the characteristics in existing law of a vehicle that may not be advertised, sold or labeled as an e-bike to include a vehicle with, that is or that is capable of any of the following (a) a motor power of more than 750 watts, (b) attaining a speed greater than 20 miles per hour (MPH) on motor power alone, (c) a motor capable of providing assistance when the vehicle reaches a speed exceeding 28 miles per hour, (d) no operable pedals and (e) a motorcycle, moped, motorized scooter, off-highway electric motorcycle, pocket bike or recreational off-highway vehicle.
- 2) Requires manufacturers and distributors of any e-bike, any moped and any motor-driven cycle to securely affix a permanent label to any such vehicle; requires the label on an e-bike (classification label) to include (a) the name of the brand, (b) the manufacturer, importer or distributor, (c) the classification number and (d) the top assisted speed and motor wattage; and prohibits the sale or installation of such an e-bike classification label unless in a physical retailer or bicycle repair shop and the retailer or shop verifies the classification label matches the e-bike class before installation.
- 3) Prohibits a person from operating a two-wheeled or three-wheeled device powered by an electric motor that is capable of propelling the device at a speed greater than 20 miles per hour on level ground on a highway or public right-of-way when powered solely by the motor unless the device meets a definition of a class of motor vehicle device that is explicitly defined in the Vehicle Code, complies with all applicable requirements for that motor vehicle and is explicitly authorized for use on a highway or public right-of-way and empowers a peace officer to remove an unauthorized device being operated on a highway or public-right-of-way.
- 4) Requires any incident report filed by a peace officer for an injury or crash involving an electric bicycle, moped or motor-driven cycle include all of the information provided on the device's label, if available.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Cost pressures (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund) of an unknown, but potentially significant amount to the courts to adjudicate any additional filings resulting from violations of the requirements and prohibitions in this bill. Actual costs will depend on the number of cases filed and the amount of court time needed to resolve each case. It generally costs approximately \$1,000 to operate a courtroom for one hour. Although courts are not funded on the basis of workload, increased pressure on the Trial Court Trust Fund may create a demand for increased funding for courts from the General Fund. The state budget provides annual General Fund backfills to the Trial Court Trust Fund to offset revenue reductions, totaling approximately \$117.3 million in 2025-26.
- 2) The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) anticipates minor costs associated with forms and publication updates, including revisions to the Motorcycle Handbook.
- 3) The California Highway Patrol (CHP) anticipates minor, absorbable costs for policy and training updates and to collect additional crash data.
- 4) Costs to local law enforcement to collect additional crash data. The committee does not know the magnitude of these local costs but notes the CHP expects such costs to be minor and absorbable, as described above. Nonetheless, these local costs may be significant in the aggregate, statewide. The state would need to reimburse these local costs, likely from the General Fund, if locals file a claim with the Commission on State Mandates and the commission determines the costs to be a reimbursable state mandate.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** The author intends this bill to place in law requirements regarding the labeling and sale of e-bikes to better enable consumer awareness, truth in advertising and data collection, all in furtherance of public safety. According to the author:

the three class system for e-bikes can be confusing for consumers, media, healthcare providers, and law enforcement. Unscrupulous businesses have taken advantage of this confusion by selling powerful motor vehicles as ‘e-bikes.’ SB 1167 will improve community safety by better regulating motor vehicles that look like e-bikes so purchasers are aware of the safety risks, manufactures are held responsible for misleading advertisements, and law enforcement can collect better data.

- 2) **Background.** The popularity of e-bikes has grown tremendously in recent years. Some sources report that annual e-bike sales exceed that of new cars. Not surprisingly, as e-bikes have become prevalent, so have conflicts between e-bike riders and other users of the road (and sidewalk, and bike path, and trail, and seemingly any other public space.) So, too, have injuries attributed to e-bikes grown.

But not every e-bike is an e-bike; at least, not as California law defines that term. According to California law, an e-bike is a two-wheeled or three-wheeled vehicle with pedals and an electric motor that produces no more than 750 watts of power. California law sorts e-bikes into three classes, as follows:

- **Class 1 — low-speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle.** The motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the e-bike reaches a speed of 20 mph.
- **Class 2 — low-speed throttle-assisted electric bicycle.** The motor may provide assistance even when the rider is not pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the e-bike reaches 20 mph.
- **Class 3 — speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle.** The motor provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to provide assistance when the e-bike reaches 28 mph.

Any vehicle that does not meet the definition of e-bike provided in California law is not considered an e-bike in California, as far as the law is concerned. This includes a bicycle-shaped device with an electric motor capable of exceeding the speed limits described above. It also includes a device that, when sold, conformed to California law's definition of an e-bike but was subsequently modified—for example, the speed governor hacked to allow faster top speeds—so that it no longer meets the e-bike definition. Such electric devices may be many things, but, according to California law, they are not e-bikes. Many, or most, such devices require a license to operate and are subject to registration and insurance requirements.

“E-bikes” that are not e-bikes are common. The Mineta Transportation Institute (Mineta Institute) at San Jose State University studied e-bikes at the direction of legislation (SB 381 (Min), Chapter 869, Statutes of 2023). In a survey of middle and high schools in Marin and San Mateo counties, the Mineta Institute observed that 88% of the e-bike-like devices at Marin schools and 87% of such devices at San Mateo schools did not meet the state's definition of e-bike. It is not clear if these students, or, more likely, their parents, knew they were buying devices that were not legal e-bikes and illegal for them to ride on California public roads.

This bill is consistent with several of the recommendations made by the Mineta Institute report, undertaken pursuant to SB 381—“Exploring Electric Bicycle Safety Performance Data and Policy Options for California” (December 2025).

- 3) **Support and Opposition.** This bill has support of a long, broad list of organizations representing local governments, bicycle advocates, medical professionals and others. The sole opposition to the bill is from the Motorcycle Industry Council, which objects only to the bill's definition of the term “e-bike” in statute. According to the Council:

In practice, the term “e bike” is widely used across both the motorcycle and bicycle industries as general shorthand for a broad range of electric two wheel products. It is a common marketing and consumer facing term that does not correspond to any single statutory vehicle category. Restricting “e bike” to one legal definition would place manufacturers and retailers in a difficult compliance position, as they would be prohibited from using terminology that is already deeply embedded in industry marketing, product descriptions, and consumer expectations. This misalignment between statutory language

and established industry practice risks creating greater confusion for consumers rather than reducing it.

- 4) **Related Legislation.** The Legislature is considering several bills to regulate the sale, promotion and use of e-bikes, including AB 1557 (Papan), AB 1942 (Bauer-Kahan) and AB 2346 (Wilson), each of which passed this committee and is pending consideration in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

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