



April 2, 2014

The Honorable Kristin Olsen
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2111
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 2054: Motorized Skateboards – STRONG CONCERNS

Dear Assembly Member Olsen:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I write to provide strong concerns regarding your Assembly Bill 2054, which would authorize an electrically motorized skateboard to operate on various bicycle facilities and trails if they meet certain conditions. RCRC is an association of thirty-four rural California counties and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from those member counties.

Rural county supervisors are concerned about the safety and liability issues associated with these vehicles. In terms of safety, local agencies design and construct bicycle facilities and trails using design criteria that supports the safe use by traditional bicycles. In the case of California's trails, they are not constructed for use of motorized activities. As such, the criteria used to design and construct trails do not consider things such as speed, curvature, line of sight, or clearance that would be required to provide for safe motorized travel on an electric skateboard. Providing an exemption for motorized electronic skateboards to operate on trails not only places a safety risk on the non-motorized skateboard user but also places an immediate threat on the motorized user as well.

While AB 2054 provides a county the ability to prohibit or further regulate electrically motorized skateboards on various trails, we remain concerned that counties will retain liability for any unfortunate event that occurs on county-maintained trails, particularly for those counties that have not exercised the option of prohibiting their use. Since virtually every trail located in rural counties was not safely designed for any motorized use, we expect that rural counties will prohibit the use. As such, the goal of the bill will be greatly thwarted. Additionally, this provision creates an unfunded mandate by requiring the county to pass an ordinance to prohibit this activity, placing an additional burden on local government. Furthermore, we question why the premise of

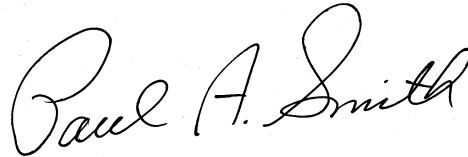
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the bill is “unless prohibited, you can use” rather than “only allowable if permitted”. As such the onus is on a municipality to say it “no”. There are liability consequences in such approach that gives us pause for concern.

Lastly, recreational hiking and biking facilities were constructed or rehabilitated using various state and federal grants to support non-motorized modes of transportation/activities. Many of these state and federal grants required documentation that funding would be used to support the construction and rehabilitation for non-motorized bicycle facilities and trails. Rural county supervisors are concerned that AB 2054 may jeopardize past, current and future state and federal funding available for the ongoing maintenance, rehabilitation and construction of these various facilities and trails.

If you should have any questions regarding these concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul A. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL A. SMITH
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Bonnie Lowenthal, Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee
Anya Lawler, Principle Consultant, Assembly Transportation Committee