



September 4, 2015

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor of California
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SUPPORT – AB 902 (Bloom and Chiu): Traffic violations: diversion programs

Dear Governor Brown:

I am writing to you as the Executive Director of Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC), a non-profit of 2,800 members with the mission to create a healthy community, environment, and economy through bicycling for people who live, work, or play in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. We are pleased to support Assembly Bill 902, which will allow a person of any age to attend a diversion program in lieu of paying a penalty for a moving violation committed on a bicycle.

When a bicyclist is ticketed for a moving violation in California that person is assessed the same monetary fine as a motor vehicle user. Enforcement of the law and setting a high standard for compliance is important for all road users, including bicyclists. However, the penalty should encourage safe behavior and not be so punitive that it discourages bicycling altogether, especially for low-income individuals who may rely on bicycling for everyday transportation. Ticketed bicyclists should be allowed to attend a diversion program, or "bicycle traffic school" class, and have the fine reduced, thus turning a purely monetary penalty into a valuable educational opportunity.

Currently, the Vehicle Code prohibits diversion programs except for minors in cases where the violation does not involve a motor vehicle, but AB 902 will correct this restriction by simply extending the eligibility for diversion programs to all persons who commit an infraction not involving a motor vehicle. Santa Clara County and Stanford University already run successful youth diversion programs. Many California cities have expressed interest in operating a bicycle diversion program if the vehicle code allowed it, and many more would likely join in once these programs were shown to be effective.

We respectfully urge you to support AB 902.

Sincerely,

Shiloh Ballard
President and Executive Director

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