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SVBC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit
organization
EIN 77-0338658

<http://bikesiliconvalley.org>

April 21, 2017

The Honorable Jim Frazier
Chair, Assembly Committee on Transportation
1020 N Street, Room 110
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support—AB 1103 (Obernolte), Bike Safety at Stop Signs

Dear Chairman Frazier,

I'm writing as the Executive Director of Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC), a membership-based non-profit 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 would like to express our support for Assembly Bill 1103, which would authorize a person bicycling to treat a stop sign like a yield sign, giving right of way to other traffic at an intersection before proceeding safely through, but without the requirement to come to a full stop.

AB 1103 will legalize safe behavior that many people bicycling already do. This type of law is frequently referred to as an "Idaho Stop" as that is where the law originated and it is defined as yielding instead of stopping at stop signs. It is common practice that a person biking slows down at an intersection and crosses if there is no other approaching traffic. If there is cross traffic of a person walking, biking, or driving, most people biking will stop and yield the right of way. A study in Chicago found that at stop signs when cross traffic was not present, 2% of people biking came to a full stop when while far more, 43%, made Idaho Stops, slowing down enough to yield if necessary and that at stop signs when cross traffic was present, 9% of people made full, while 65% made Idaho stops.¹

This type of behavior does not frequently cause collisions. In fact, a study done in Idaho after its law was passed found that bicycle injuries declined 14.5% the year after adoption of the law.² Additionally, Fort Collins surveyed stop as yield laws in nearby Colorado towns in 2013 and found no increase in crashes.³

Taking the focus off of enforcing bicyclists to stop at stop signs will also allow law enforcement to prioritize citation of more dangerous behavior. Vision Zero initiatives, the goal to eliminate traffic fatalities and major injuries, use collision data to determine the most frequent cause of collisions, the most dangerous traffic violations, and the areas where collisions usually occur. Unsafe speed is the highest factor of fatal and severe injury collisions (see related bill AB 342 for automated speed

¹ <https://las.depaul.edu/centers-and-institutes/chaddick-institute-for-metropolitan-development/research-and-publications/Documents/PoliciesForPedaling-120816-FNL.pdf>

² <http://docplayer.net/1126976-Meggs-jason-n-stops-harm-bikes-page-1-of-15-title-page.html>

³ <http://citydocs.fcgov.com/?cmd=convert&vid=218&docid=2137178&dt=MAIL+PA CKET>



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enforcement). In San Jose for example, 42% of fatalities involved drivers/motorcyclists that were speeding or that lost control of their vehicle.⁴ A study put together by the Santa Clara County Public Health Department found that failure to obey traffic signals and signs caused only 10% of car-bike collisions in Santa Clara County from 2009-2012.⁵ To eliminate deaths and major injuries on our roadways, we should allow law enforcement to prioritize speeding and other unsafe behaviors.

AB 1103 could contribute toward Caltrans' goal to triple bicycling by 2020 by making it easier for people biking to travel on low-volume streets with stop signs and create a more comfortable street environment. Please support the passage of AB 1103.

Sincerely,

Shiloh Ballard
President and Executive Director

⁴ <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/56183>

⁵ <https://www.sccgov.org/sites/sccphd/en-us/Partners/Data/Documents/Bicycle%20Transport%20and%20Safety%20Final%202015.pdf>