



TOM TIFFANY

STATE SENATOR • 12TH SENATE DISTRICT

Testimony on Senate Bill 566 Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry January 16, 2018

Thank you members of the Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry for hearing Senate Bill 566 related to lighting requirements on bicycles and motor bicycles.

Wisconsin is known as a year-round destination for outdoor recreation. This can lead to different user groups sharing space and increase the potential for conflict. This is especially true during Wisconsin's winter season which has seen the growth of winter biking and so called "fat" bikes.

Winter also brings shorter periods of sun and increased likelihood of different users coming into contact during low visibility hours. An example of this has occurred in the district I represent. Snowmobile users on Bearskin State Trail in Oneida County have noted the difficulty of locating users of "fat" bikes who are not using lights.

In order to ensure all users are able to enjoy Wisconsin's state trails safely, Senate Bill 566 requires a lamp emitting a white light on the front of the bicycle or the operator and a lamp emitting a red light on the rear of the bicycle or the operator. The issue was brought to the attention of the Governor's Bicycle Coordinating Council by the Department of Natural Resources. This proposal has the support of the Nonmotorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council, Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin and various snowmobile organizations.

Again, thank you members of the Senate Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry for taking my testimony on Senate Bill 566. I would appreciate your support.

Thank you.

Tom Tiffany
Wisconsin State Senate
12th Senate District



RON TUSLER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 3rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on Senate Bill 566

Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry

January 16, 2018

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 566. This bill will help keep winter cyclists and snowmobilers safe while operating on state trails.

Under current law, a bicyclist must have a white light visible from the front of their bike and a red reflector or red light visible from the back of their bike when operating on a highway, sidewalk, bicycle lane, or bicycle way, but not when operating on a state trail.¹ This bill requires a white light visible from the front of their bike and red light visible from the back of their bike when operating on state trails² during hours of darkness.³

This issue was brought to the attention of the Nonmotorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council by the Department of Natural Resources. As “fat bikes” have increased in popularity, “fat bike” cyclists and snowmobilers have come into increased contact while enjoying our state’s recreational trails, creating a safety hazard for both the snowmobiler and cyclist. A “fat bike” is a bicycle that has oversized wheels and is frequently driven on snow. Snowmobilers on the Bearskin State Trail in Oneida County have noted the difficulty of locating users of “fat bikes” who are not using lights. The lighting requirement will help ensure everyone enjoying our state trails is safe at night year-round.

Thank you for your consideration. Senator Tiffany, Representative Genrich and I ask for your support.

¹ See Wis. Stat. 347.489.

² See NR 51.73 (1) (list of state trails).

³ Wis. Stat. 340.01 (23) (“Hours of darkness’ means the period of time from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise and all other times when there is not sufficient natural light to render clearly visible any person or vehicle upon a highway at a distance of 500 feet.”).