

**For Immediate Release**

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**TRANSPORTATION  
ALTERNATIVES**



**OpenPlans**

## **Coalition Led by Transportation Alternatives, Los Deliveristas Unidos, Open Plans, and StreetsPAC Calls on New York City Council to Reject E-Bike Registration Bill**

*Bike registration has repeatedly proven to be ineffective and expensive.*

*211 New Yorkers have been killed in traffic crashes this year – 99% from cars and trucks.*

NEW YORK, NY — On Thursday, a coalition of 31 safe streets, climate justice, and immigrant rights advocates led by Transportation Alternatives, Los Deliveristas Unidos, Open Plans, and StreetsPAC sent a letter calling on the New York City Council to reject Intro 0758-2022, Council Member Bob Holden's bill to require registration and licensing for e-bikes.

31 leading organizations on the frontlines of fighting for New Yorkers' needs when it comes to immigrant rights, sustainability, worker justice, and street safety – including Make the Road, NYCLV, Street Vendors Project, Align NY, and more – have come together to resoundingly reject this misguided legislation.

Bike registration would fail to make our streets safer:

- Toronto, for example, extensively studied the question of bike licensing and concluded it was ineffective, costly, a waste of resources, and a bureaucratic nightmare.

- Cities that have adopted laws to register and license bikes have seen declining ridership, increased police stops in communities of color, and, ultimately, an increase in traffic violence.
- 211 New Yorkers have been killed in traffic crashes this year, and in just the first six months of 2023, [1,361 were seriously injured](#). More than 99% of these deaths and injuries are caused by cars and trucks.
- Mandating “bike licenses” will encourage gas-powered mopeds, which are much heavier, faster, and more dangerous than bikes.

Instead of passing bike registration laws, elected officials should pass smart, targeted legislation to make the city's streets safer. Legislation such as [Intro 1168](#), [Intro 1163-2023](#), [S7703/A08052](#), and [S3304/A4637](#) will immediately improve street safety, reduce fire risk, and increase accountability for e-bike riders, sellers, and app companies.

Read the full letter below:

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

As advocates and leaders with a long history of working to advance safe streets and sustainable transportation, we are writing in regards to the growing challenge of new motorized modes, including e-bikes and mopeds, on our streets. As we embrace new ways to get around, we must advance proven, data-driven legislation that ensures safety – and addresses the conditions that leave pedestrians feeling unsafe – not short-term and reactionary policy that will make our streets more dangerous.

The challenge of motorized transportation is broad and multifaceted, encompassing issues from battery fires to working conditions to safe street improvements. However, a vocal minority would have you believe that the answer is singular: the creation of a licensing and registration system for the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers who ride bikes every day, whether to take their kids to school, to commute to work, or as their profession.

**Advancing legislation, like Intro 0758-2022 or other bills that seek to license and register bikes, would be ineffective, dangerous, expensive, short-sighted, and bureaucratically complicated.** Moreover, it would open a door to licensing all bikes, which would be disastrous for transportation in New York City, and roll back decades of work to give New Yorkers more affordable and sustainable means of traveling across the five boroughs.

There is a wealth of data supporting opposition to this legislation. Bike licensing has been proposed in New York City multiple times before and always failed to generate popular support due to its implications: mainly, discouraging people from riding bicycles and reducing the number of people who do so, thus, making streets more dangerous for all users. Toronto, for example, extensively studied the question of bike licensing and concluded it was [ineffective, costly, a waste of resources, and a bureaucratic nightmare](#).

Cities that have adopted laws to register and license bikes have seen declining ridership, increased police stops in communities of color, and an increase in traffic violence. Bike licensing would threaten the livelihood of many, including New York City's majority-immigrant food delivery workforce, and create a new cause for pretextual police stops in communities of color. Mandating "bike licenses" would also fuel a massive rise in gas-powered mopeds, which are antithetical to our climate goals, are often operated illegally, and operate at much faster speeds and with heavier curb weights than e-bikes, increasing the likelihood of a deadly crash.

Today, our policies are not meeting the needs of our city. So far this year, 211 New Yorkers have been killed in traffic crashes, and in just the first six months of 2023, 1,361 were seriously injured. More than 99% of these deaths and injuries are caused by cars and trucks. Food delivery work has surpassed construction to become the single most dangerous occupation in New York City by an order of magnitude. Transportation remains the #2 source of greenhouse gas emissions in New York State.

E-bikes are critical tools to address these challenges, and the best transportation option for many New Yorkers bringing children to school, commuting across boroughs to work, traveling with mobility issues, connecting with transit from transportation deserts, or working to deliver goods from one end of our city to the other.

We believe that the City of New York must advance targeted and proven solutions to these challenges. Just as the city adapted when ride-hailing services disrupted our city, causing new obstacles as well as opportunities, it's time for smart, actionable, and effective responses.

As we develop new regulatory responses and policy proposals to address this problem, we believe that passing the following pieces of legislation, already introduced in the Council and state legislature, will immediately improve street safety, reduce fire risk, and increase accountability for e-bike riders, sellers, and app companies:

- [Intro 1168](#): This bill would require delivery app companies to provide safe e-bikes at no cost to workers to reduce the risk of dangerous battery fires. Safe lithium batteries currently operate our electric vehicles, our laptops, and more; making e-bike batteries equally safe simply requires legislation to ensure access and top-down accountability.
- [Int 1163-2023](#): This bill would require workplace safety training and certification be provided to delivery workers and mandate that delivery app companies equip workers with bicycle safety equipment and identifiable headgear or visible stickers to ensure accountability and safety. Streets are also workplaces and we need safe practices for workers to ensure rules of the road are known and followed, and reckless behavior is prohibited.
- [S7703/ A08052](#): This bill would require a license and registration for mopeds be provided at point of sale, along with information on registration requirements and penalties for violating

registration requirements. Mopeds and motorcycles are required to be licensed, however unlicensed mopeds have proliferated in the past year, and this legislation seeks to address a widespread problem by prohibiting these vehicles from entering our roadways.

- [S3304/A4637](#): This legislation would create a system of automated bike lane safety cameras. Research shows that lawless behavior by cyclists is done protectively, to avoid danger caused by large vehicles. Automated bike lane safety cameras would protect the bike lane as sacred spaces for bikes and e-bikes by discouraging cars and trucks from operating in them, and thus providing safe space for cycling and encouraging cyclists to comply with the law.

In the coming weeks, we will share additional proposals to address the regulatory issues at the heart of this challenge and support pedestrians, bike riders, and all street users. In the interim, we urge you to advance the above legislation and rescind sponsorship of Intro 0758-2022, for the safety of all New Yorkers and in the name of advancing effective, actionable, and feasible solutions to real problems.

Sincerely,

34th Ave Open Streets Coalition

ALIGN: The Alliance for a Greater New York

Alliance for Paseo Park

Asian American Federation

Bike New York

Brooklyn Greenway Initiative

Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC)

DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving

Eastern Queens Greenway

El Puente Cycling Club

Families for Safe Streets

Lime

Los Deliveristas Unidos

Make Queens Safer

Make the Road New York

Neighbors for A Safer Austin Street

New York Bicycling Coalition

New York League of Conservation Voters

Oonee  
Open Plans  
Regional Plan Association  
Riders Alliance  
Ridgewood Rides  
South Bronx Unite  
STAR Academy PTA  
Street Vendors Project  
StreetsPAC  
Transportation Alternatives  
Tri-State Transportation Campaign  
UP-STAND  
WE Bike NYC

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*Families for Safe Streets members — crash survivors or loved ones of crash victims — are available for interviews upon request.*