



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 224

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the New York State Governor to sign, S.7587/A.7833, known as the “Commercial E-Bike Licensing Act,” which requires the registration of bicycles with electric assist used for commercial purposes and creates liability for employers for certain violations.

By Council Members Brewer, Gennaro, Marte and Avilés

Whereas, Bicycles equipped with an electric motor (e-bikes) have become a popular mode of transportation for individuals and method of delivery for food and small goods, since 2020, when New York State (NYS) made it legal for people to operate e-bikes on some streets and highways; and

Whereas, Under NYS Law, e-bikes may operate on highways with a posted speed limit of 30 miles per hour or less; municipalities can further regulate the time, place and manner of operation of e-bikes; and e-bikes cannot be operated on a sidewalk unless authorized by local law or ordinance; and

Whereas, E-bikes offer a convenient and effective option for personal transportation, but also for workers in the delivery industry; and

Whereas, According to estimates, in New York City (NYC), there are approximately 65,000 food-delivery workers that work on behalf of mobile app delivery services such as Uber Eats, DoorDash and Grubhub, and according to the Workers Justice Project, about 80% of delivery workers rely on e-bikes or motorbikes; and

Whereas, With the increased prevalence of e-bikes in NYC, road users have noted the danger these devices can sometimes pose to pedestrians, other cyclists, and themselves when operated impermissibly, including being driven on sidewalks and riders not complying with traffic safety regulations; and

Whereas, It is possible that food delivery workers choosing to engage in dangerous riding behavior is

largely fueled by pressure from delivery companies requiring delivery workers to conduct delivery of food and goods as fast as possible; and

Whereas, For 2022, according to the NYC Department of Transportation, e-bikes with pedals were involved in nine fatalities, and, as of July 4, 2023, for 2023, e-bikes with pedals were involved in 12 fatalities; and

Whereas, In an effort to ensure that commercial e-bike users comply with regulations and operate in a safe manner, for the well-being of both themselves and others, while ultimately reducing the number of fatalities and injuries related to such devices, S7587/A.7833, known as the “Commercial E-Bike Licensing Act,” was introduced at the state level; and

Whereas, S.7587, introduced by NYS Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, and A.7833, introduced by NYS Assemblymember Tony Simone, would require the registration and licensure of e-bikes used for commercial purposes, and directs the costs of violations relating to riding such a bicycle on a sidewalk to the employer of the commercial e-bike rider; and

Whereas, By requiring the registration of e-bikes used for commercial purposes and requiring visible license information, delivery e-bikes involved in dangerous situations could be easily identified, with any fines or violations being placed on the employer, and not the delivery worker; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the New York State Governor to sign, S.7587/A.7833, known as the “Commercial E-Bike Licensing Act,” which requires the registration of bicycles with electric assist used for commercial purposes and creates liability for employers for certain violations.

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