

5 March 2016

The Secretary
Economy and Infrastructure Committee
LCLC@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Secretary

Cyclists matter– support minimum overtaking distance legislation in Victoria of 1 metre

We are calling on you to support the introduction of minimum overtaking distance – **a minimum of one metre**– laws in Victoria.

As cyclists who commute to work every day and who ride for recreation on the weekends we believe the current Victorian road rules which require drivers to allow *sufficient* distance when overtaking a bicycle rider are inadequate.

Time after time the cycling community sees altercations with motorists where the car has not given sufficient space and due to an “our word against theirs scenario” often there are no consequences for actions which are of no impact on the motorist but deadly for the cyclist. These laws would ensure that motorists think twice before coming too close.

One metre plus passing laws would require drivers to leave a **minimum distance of 1 metre when overtaking bicycle riders at speeds up to 60 km per hour** and a **minimum of 1.5m** when overtaking at speeds of over 60km per hour.

Across Australia five jurisdictions have implemented one metre plus passing laws - South Australia has mandated these laws, Queensland, the ACT and New South Wales are trialling the laws, and some road rules have been amended in Tasmania to reflect one metre passing.

Implementing one metre passing legislation is a logical and practical step to changing behaviour, and provides an *objective* measure for law enforcement.

We support the Amy Gillett Foundation’s **a metre matters** campaign and urge you to support the introduction of one metre passing laws in Victoria.

One metre plus passing laws provide absolute, practical and enforceable clarity. These laws:

- Recognise that bicycle riders are physically vulnerable and need the protection of space
- Provide drivers with a clear, easily recognised measure when overtaking bicycle riders – otherwise they must slow down and wait
- Reduce the risk of bicycle rider-driver crashes, and bicycle rider crashes resulting from being side-swiped (but not hit) by motor vehicles
- Are enforceable; they allow a law enforcement officer or witness to readily observe a driver’s actions
- Will improve safety for bicycle riders
- Acknowledge bicycle riders are legitimate road users
- Will ultimately reduce bicycle rider fatalities and serious injuries.

One metre plus passing laws already exist in countries in Europe and in 29 states in the US.

Research shows that **a metre matters** is working in promoting behaviour change, and that cyclists feel safer. For more information, please go to: <http://www.amygillett.org.au/a-metre-matters>

Better infrastructure is critical for safe cycling but we cannot afford to wait for safe cycling infrastructure to be built. The law is practical, enforceable, will reduce serious injuries and **will save bicycle riders’ lives.**

Everyone has the right to ride safely for work and play.

We urge you to support the introduction of **one metre passing** laws in Victoria without delay.

Sincerely

Rebecca Skinner and Peter Milner