

Dea Sir/Madam,

A metre matters – support minimum overtaking distance legislation in Victoria

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

The current Victorian road rules require drivers to allow *sufficient* distance when overtaking a bicycle rider. *Sufficient* is vague and subjective and has repeatedly not protected bicycle riders.

A metre matters 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 **a metre matters** - 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 **a metre matters**.

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

I support the Amy Gillett Foundation's **a metre matters** campaign and urge you to support the introduction of **a metre matters** laws in Victoria.

a metre matters 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.

a metre matters 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>

A metre matters is innovative in its simplicity and immediacy. 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**.

As a cyclist, I am constantly exposed to drivers passing dangerously close to myself & fellow riders. Cars have cut in front of us, yelled abuse and swerved dangerously into my path. I have on more than one occasion felt the side mirror of a car brush my leg or narrowly avoided being hit by a car door swinging violently open from a parked car. Speaking to many people it is clear that many motorists have little understanding of the rights of bike riders to be on the road or to ride two abreast. In addition, four years ago, my husband's brother and his wife were hit and killed by a truck whilst out riding their tandem bike on a beautiful sunny day on the Mornington Peninsula.

I am personally very clear that we need a strong education campaign followed by legislative

The bigger picture is one of altering the culture on our roads from one of aggression, entitlement and impatience to one of respect, tolerance and inclusion.

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

I urge you to support the introduction of **a metre matters** laws in Victoria without delay.

Sincerely,