

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

Voting Members:

Radiant Cordero, Chair; Val A. Okimoto, Vice-Chair;
Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, Andria Tupola, Matt Weyer

Committee Meeting Held
February 12, 2025

Honorable Tommy Waters
Chair, City Council
City and County of Honolulu

Mr. Chair:

Your Committee on Planning, Infrastructure & Transportation, to which was referred Bill 61 (2024) entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO WHEELIES,"

introduced on November 7, 2024, and which passed First Reading at the December 11, 2024, Council meeting, reports as follows:

The purpose of the Bill is to promote public safety for drivers and pedestrians using the public transportation system in the City and County of Honolulu by addressing the performance of stunts on public roadways.

Your Committee, at its meeting on January 16, 2025, postponed action on the Bill to allow more time to work on improving the measure, by proposing certain amendments to address the concerns.

At your Committee's meeting on February 12, 2025, the Director Designate of Transportation Services ("DTS Director") testified in support of the measure and the proposed CD1.

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

Ke Kanihela o ke Kalana o Honolulu
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

ADOPTED ON **FEB 26 2025**

COMMITTEE REPORT NO. **35**

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION

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Your Committee prepared a CD1 version (OCS2025-0135/2/13/2025 12:37 PM) that makes the following amendment(s):

A. In SECTION 1 of the bill, adds to the purpose statement:

1. Detailed data from a study by the State of Hawai'i ("State") Department of Health concerning incidents and injuries involving electric bicycles on O'ahu, and their financial impact; and
2. A statement that the City Council considers it necessary to protect bicycle operators and the public at large from such incidents with new safety requirements, while also acknowledging that the State Legislature plans to amend the Statewide Traffic Code in 2025 to address the issue, which may supersede requirement in this ordinance.

B. In SECTION 2 of the bill:

1. Revises the proposed definitions of "*Electric Bicycle*," "*Moped*," and "*Wheelie*" in Section 15-24. ____ to read as follows:

Electric Bicycle. A bicycle equipped with a motor.

Moped. Has the same meaning as defined in HRS § 291C-1.

Wheelie. A stunt performed by a person while riding on an electric bicycle, moped, or motorcycle in which the front wheel is raised so that the vehicle is balanced for a moment or longer on its rear wheel or wheels.

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2. Adds a new proposed definition of "*Motorcycle*," defined as "the same meaning as defined in HRS § 291C-1."
- C. Makes miscellaneous technical and nonsubstantive amendments.

Your Committee on Planning, Infrastructure & Transportation is in accord with the intent and purpose of Bill 61 (2024), as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading, be scheduled for public hearing, and be referred back to Committee in the form attached hereto as Bill 61 (2024), CD1. (Ayes: Cordero, Dos Santos-Tam, Okimoto, Tupola, Weyer – 5; Noes: None.)

Respectfully submitted,

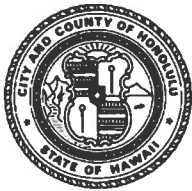


Committee Chair

HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
Ke Kanihela o ke Kalana o Honolulu
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COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 35



HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

ORDINANCE _____

BILL 61 (2024), CD1

A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE

RELATING TO WHEELIES.

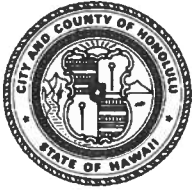
BE IT ORDAINED by the People of the City and County of Honolulu:

SECTION 1. Purpose. The purpose of this ordinance is to promote public safety for drivers and pedestrians using the public transportation system in the City and County of Honolulu by addressing the performance of stunts on public roadways.

A study by the State of Hawai'i ("State") Department of Health covering the past three years (2022 to 2024), found that Emergency Medical Services ("EMS") attended to numerous injuries resulting from incidents involving e-bikes ("e-bike incidents") on O'ahu and that the number e-bike incidents has shown a concerning upward trend in Hawai'i. The average number of reported e-bike incidents statewide more than doubled from an average of 10 per month in 2022 to 24 per month in 2024, with O'ahu experiencing a nearly threefold increase, from an average of seven per month in 2022 to 19 per month in 2024. O'ahu accounted for 75 percent of the statewide e-bike incidents, with most of the injured patients (65 percent) being transported by the EMS for further medical attention. The typical individual involved in an e-bike incident on O'ahu is a younger male, with the average age of an EMS-treated patient at 32 years old. On O'ahu, there is a clustering of injuries in individuals between the ages of 12 and 20. About half of the injuries occurred between 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., and head injuries, including traumatic brain injuries, were notably prevalent among patients.

Helmet usage among e-bike riders steadily declined during the study period, from 51 percent in 2022 to 29 percent in 2024. Helmeted riders were older, on average, and experienced fewer traumatic brain injuries than unhelmeted riders (13 percent vs. 32 percent). Additionally, unhelmeted riders were more likely to require hospitalization, with head injuries being most common among this group. These findings highlight the critical role of helmet use in reducing the severity of head and brain injuries, and the need for intervention to promote helmet usage.

The financial impact of e-bike-related injuries is significant, with average medical costs reaching \$16,162 for emergency department visits and \$121,445 for hospitalizations. Hospitalized patients often required extended care, including discharge to skilled nursing or rehabilitation facilities. The rising incidence of injuries, declining helmet usage, and the substantial medical costs associated with e-bike incidents underscores the urgency of implementing regulations to enhance safety, including mandatory helmet use for younger riders and educational campaigns regarding e-bike safety practices.



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ORDINANCE _____

BILL 61 (2024), CD1

A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE

Although the State Legislature did not pass e-bike legislation in 2024, the City Council ("Council") considers it necessary to address this emergent issue with new safety requirements to protect e-bike operators and the public at large from e-bike incidents. However, the Council acknowledges that the State Legislature plans to amend the Statewide Traffic Code in 2025 to address the issue, which may supersede some of the requirements set forth in this ordinance.

SECTION 2. Chapter 15, Article 24, Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated by the Revisor of Ordinances and to read as follows:

"§ 15-24. Wheelies prohibited.

- (a) Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning:

Electric Bicycle. A bicycle equipped with a motor.

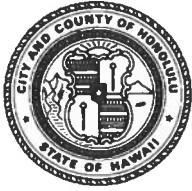
Moped. Has the same meaning as defined in HRS § 291C-1.

Motorcycle. Has the same meaning as defined in HRS § 291C-1.

Wheelie. A stunt performed by a person while riding on an electric bicycle, moped, or motorcycle in which the front wheel is raised so that the vehicle is balanced for a moment or longer on its rear wheel or wheels.

- (b) Prohibition. A person may not perform a wheelie on any public street or roadway; provided that this subsection does not apply to a person performing a wheelie as part of a parade, tournament, or other activity permitted by the city."

SECTION 3. New ordinance material is underscored. When revising, compiling, or printing this ordinance for inclusion in the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021, the Revisor of Ordinances need not include the underscoring.



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ORDINANCE _____

BILL 61 (2024), CD1

A BILL FOR AN ORDINANCE

SECTION 4. This ordinance takes effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY:

Matt Weyer

Radiant Cordero

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

November 7, 2024
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Deputy Corporation Counsel

APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 20 ____.

RICK BLANGIARDI, Mayor
City and County of Honolulu

Report Title:

Wheelie; Electric Bicycle; Bicycle Equipped with a Motor; E-Bikes; Moped; Motorcycle; Parade; Tournament; Street; Roadway; Safe Driving; Stunt; Prohibition

Description:

Prohibits the performance of wheelies on public streets and roadways by drivers of electric bicycles ("e-bikes"), mopeds, and motorcycles, except as part of a parade, tournament, or other activity permitted by the City. Defines a "wheelie" as "[a] stunt performed by a person while riding on an electric bicycle, moped, or motorcycle in which the front wheel is raised so that the vehicle is balanced for a moment or longer on its rear wheel or wheels." Defines "electric bicycle" as "[a] bicycle equipped with a motor."

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.