**Please support HB3021 – Make Cycling Safer in West Virginia**

Why repeal “Far to the Right” -- Cyclists riding on the right edge of the roadway as required by 17C-11-5(a) increase the following risks:

* Motorists passing bicycles too closely;
* Motorists intruding into the adjacent lane when the adjacent lane is not clear;
* Right-turning vehicles crashing into cyclists;
* On-coming left-turning vehicles crashing into cyclists;
* Overtaking vehicles crashing into left-turning cyclists;
* Cyclists crashing because of objects; debris; pedestrians; animals and surface hazards that are more prevalent at the right edge of the roadway.

Most WV travel lanes are too narrow for motor vehicles to safely pass bicycles without intruding into the adjacent lane even when the cyclist is riding on the right edge of the road. When cyclists ride on the right edge of the lane, motorists pass too closely and intrude into the adjacent lane even if there is traffic in the adjacent lane. If cyclists ride farther from the right edge, motorists will not try to pass until the adjacent lane is clear. 17C-11-5(a) requires bicyclists to ride at the right edge of the roadway and thus encourages motorists to pass when it is unsafe to do so.

Cyclists riding on the right edge of the roadway are more likely to crash due to objects; debris; pedestrians; animals and surface hazards that are more prevalent at the right edge of the roadway than farther in the roadway. WV is only one of nine states that do not have far to the right without any exceptions.

Why repeal Mandatory Bike Path language -- WV is also only one of 11 states that have a mandatory side path requirement. Debris, egress and ingress points, and lack of continuity make it difficult for bikers commuting to work, school or for essential errands should not be required to stay on recreational bike paths.

Why include a Three or Four Foot Passing rule -- Twenty three states have a minimum three-foot passing rule; Pennsylvania recently enacted a four-foot passing rule.

* creates an easily visualized distance for police to enforce and for

motorists to employ when passing bicyclists;

* increases awareness that bicyclists are legitimate road users;
* establishes a bicyclist's right to space and improves interactions with

 motorists (previously, motorists may have been unsure of the minimum distance required to safely pass a bicyclist);

* can lead to an increase in the number and types of bicyclists within the community;
* may help support implementation of Complete Streets policies;
* is consistent with 3 or 4-foot passing requirements in adjoining states, PA, MD and TN motorists to employ when passing bicyclists.

For more information please contact Kasey Russell, WV Connecting Communities at 304.542.1994 or Gary Zuckett at 304.346.5891.