

Legislative Report August 2026

While things are still quiet during the off-session time period, factors are working to make changes to the bills that will be re-presented at the start of the next session. Of primary concern at this time is the Lane Filtering legislation that I have been working on; it appears that other interested parties have also been working on this. New wording has been added to HB 461, the Motorcycle Mobility Safety Act (also informally known as “the dead-red bill”) to add lane filtering verbiage to this already multi-faceted (and somewhat convoluted) bill. First presented here is the opening summary:

*26 LC 39 4951S The House Committee on Motor Vehicles offers the following substitute to
HB 461: A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT*

To amend Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to motor vehicles and traffic, so as to revise and provide for definitions; to provide for the safe operation of a motorcycle or bicycle through certain inoperative traffic-control devices and signals; to require drivers of motor vehicles to stop at crosswalks with pedestrian activated rectangular rapid flash beacons; to make it unlawful to activate such devices when there is no intent to cross a roadway; to authorize the operation of motorcycles to overtake or pass stationary motor vehicles in the same lane as such motorcycle in certain instances; to provide for a conforming change; to provide for a short title; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

The specific section being amended to include lane filtering is Section 5, including the repeal of existing language that two vehicles may not use the same lane simultaneously. The copy:

SECTION 5. Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 40-6-312, relating to operating motorcycle on roadway laned for traffic, as follows:

26 "40-6-312. LC 39 4951S (starting at line 88) (a) All motorcycles are entitled to full use of a lane, and no motor vehicle shall be driven in such a manner as to deprive any motorcycle of the full use of a lane. This subsection shall not apply to motorcycles operated two abreast in a single lane. (b) The operator of a motorcycle shall ~~not be~~ authorized to overtake and pass in the same lane occupied by the vehicle being overtaken when: (1) The motorcycle is being driven to overtake and pass stationary vehicles or gain access to an adjacent turning lane while such stationary vehicles are waiting for the

change of direction for a traffic-control signal; and (2) The motorcycle is traveling at a speed of 15 miles per hour or less. (c) ~~No person shall operate a motorcycle between lanes of traffic or between adjacent lines or rows of vehicles.~~ (d) Motorcycles shall not be operated more than two abreast in a single lane. (e)(d) A person operating a motorcycle shall at all times keep the headlights and taillights illuminated. (f)(e) Subsection ~~Subsections (b) and (c)~~ of this Code section shall not apply to police officers in the performance of their official duties."

To clarify, the strikethrough wording is existing language that is proposed to be removed, and the underlined is new language. While these changes could potentially achieve our goal, I am somewhat troubled by what could be perceived as “sneaking in the language” in an existing bill, rather than creating a free-standing bill to ensure clarity. In the six states that currently have lane filtering laws in place, I believe they have done so, and I have not yet found any that contain the “adjacent turning lane” language that this has. It does add specificity to how motorcycles could filter lanes past stopped traffic at intersections, but I think it may add more confusion to an already controversial topic. My primary concern is that this lane filtering language is being added to a bill that has already been through the Motor Vehicle Committee, and at least to my eyes, appears to be “dropped in” to avoid controversy. I believe a free-standing bill could be addressed more effectively.

Again, if this works, well, that’s great and I’ll “eat crow”, but I fear this added text may get the bill shot down entirely. I suppose (to look at the optimistic side) at the very least this will get the conversation of lane filtering started. I’m planning to have some discussions with members of the Motor Vehicle Committee to get their insight and opinions. Hopefully I’ll have more to report on that in the upcoming months.

Lastly, on a personal note, I am scheduled for my next surgery on 8/19 to remove the crushed section of bone in my right leg, and start a long process of moving and re-growing new bone. Yes, I’m still going through surgeries from the motorcycle accident of August 2024! It may be a long time before I’m back on two wheels (which breaks my heart), but I’ll get there!

Ride safely, please.

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