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59th Assembly District



AB-371: E-Device Braille & Liability Protection for Pedestrians

SUMMARY

AB-371 ensures pedestrians are extended existing liability coverage if they are injured by a shared mobility device, such as an electronic scooter or bike (collectively e-devices), whether in use or parked inappropriately.

This bill also requires the addition of braille and tactile signage with raised characters for pedestrians who are blind or have vision impairments.

BACKGROUND

As e-devices become a more popular means of transportation, pedestrians face an increased risk of injury. Despite laws and e-device guidelines prohibiting otherwise, users continue to ride the devices on sidewalks and often fail to park them in areas recommended in the mobile app. Some e-device mobile apps even have users take pictures after their ride, however, pedestrians, especially the vision impaired, continue to find devices obstructing their passageway.

E-devices laying across the sidewalks, risks pedestrian injury, including those with disabilities, children, and senior citizens who are vulnerable to injury from falls. Improperly parked e-devices pose a great danger to those who are blind. These individuals rely on clear walkways free of hindrance. Poorly placed devices left on sidewalks can also result in dangerous injuries to the pedestrians who are blind or have vision impairments.

Existing liability coverage is already afforded to users injured as result of operating e-devices, but does not extend to accident victims. Other modes of transportation, such as Zipcar, ensure liability coverage for those injured by a user operating their devices. As e-devices become a more heavily utilized means of transportation, existing insurance protection must be extended to pedestrians as well.

Finally, e-devices, currently, have the QR code, used to scan and rent the device, as well as the device provider's name and logo. The absence of braille or tactile signage with raised characters, however, prevents individuals who are blind or have vision impairments from accessing information about the e-device company in the event of an accident resulting from negligence.

THIS BILL

AB-371 will specify liability coverage, required under existing permits or agreements, will include coverage for a pedestrian injured by a shared mobility device due to negligent conduct.

AB-371 will also require braille and tactile signage with raised characters to be added to each device, thus enabling pedestrians who are blind or have vision impairments to identify the device provider and necessary contact information to file a report.

SUPPORT

California Council of the Blind (Sponsor)
Association of California State Employees with Disabilities
Association of Regional Center Agencies
California Insurance Wholesalers Association
California Walks
Consumer Attorneys of California
Disability Rights California
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Guide Dogs for the Blind
Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Surplus Line Association of California

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