



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

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DiCicco Remarks on Bicycle Registration November 19, 2009

The cycling community has expressed some apprehension over the legislation that was introduced today and rightfully so. Before those concerns grow, I wanted to clarify my intent and my hopes for this bill.

First, this legislation is not an attempt to curb bike riding. I have supported the Administration in its attempts to improve bicycle safety and make it easier to utilize alternative forms of transportation. I will continue in that support.

Nor is this legislation a money-grab. A one-time fee of \$20 is hardly a windfall for the City and my hope is that any revenue raised would be directed towards enforcement or educational programs.

Most importantly, that fee, like everything else in this bill, is negotiable. This is the beginning of a conversation and the beginning of the legislative process. In fact, the very foundation of the legislation is negotiable – if there are alternatives to registration that help us reach the same goals, I think we’ll all be satisfied.

What is not an option, however, is that the City continue to do nothing when it comes to the regulation of bicycles, the education of the bicycle riding public and the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

How many times have we seen cyclists on the sidewalk? Been nearly clipped crossing the street? Had to dodge someone going the wrong way on a one-way street or press the breaks because someone ran a red light? Yes, I know these cyclists are a minority of the population but there’s no way for the police or for the public to identify that rider.

And, while rare, serious accidents involving cyclists and pedestrians do happen. Last month, two pedestrians, in different instances, were killed. In one of those accidents, the rider was never identified.

While I know its not an elegant solution, my hope is that registration will help identify problem cyclists and become a tool for enforcement. I also hope that by requiring registration, we gain a point of contact for better educating the riding public.

I know that the Bicycle Coalition, the Administration and others have the same goals – education and public safety. I look forward to working with them to resolve these issues and insuring that all the various stakeholders have a seat at the table.

To conclude, these problems can not be addressed by an “us verses them” attitude. I know that many feel that bicyclists are unpredictable and ignore traffic laws. Cyclists feel that motorists refuse to share the road. Both are right and it’s time that we all share responsibility and work towards solutions rather than simply complaining about the other.

Thank you.