Ohio motors are now required to leave at least three feet of clearance when passing bicyclists. The new law went into effect March 21.

Ohio’s new three foot passing law brings to a successful conclusion an seven-year effort by your Ohio Bicycle Federation! It involved working with several state representatives and senators and testifying before several Ohio House and Senate committees to promote four bills introduced into four consecutive sessions of the Ohio General Assembly!

The result shows that success in improving Ohio law requires uncommon persistence and patience.

After your Ohio Bicycle Federation board approved the three-foot passing initiative early in 2009, OBF Secretary Tricia Kovaks and I rode with Senator (now Representative) Teresa Fedor from her Toledo district to the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus. The ride ended with a news conference on the Statehouse grounds announcing the introduction of a three-foot passing bill.

OBF testified before the Senate Transportation Committee to support this bill, which did not pass committee. Two additional unsuccessful bills (each involving much preparation and testimony) followed before success with House Bill 154.

House Bill 154 was introduced jointly by Representatives Mike Henne of Vandalia and Mike Sheehy of Toledo in 2015. In addition to the three-foot passing requirement, HB 154 permitted any Ohio vehicle not detected at an intersection by the device meant to move the signal from red to green to proceed after stopping and yielding right-of-way.

OBF’s testimony before the House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security Committee ended in a unanimous 14-0 approval of our House Bill 154 on June 25, 2015!

Our House Bill 154 went to the desk of Speaker of the House Cliff Rosenberger, where it remained for 11 months. Your OBF led a concerted effort of emailing and phoning Speaker Rosenberger and other state representatives which ended in a successful 81 to 16 vote on May 24, 2016! The Ohio Sierra Club helped OBF immensely in this successful effort.

HB 154 was assigned to the Senate Transportation Committee as the Ohio General Assembly recessed for the summer and fall. When the Senate reconvened after the November election, little time remained to pass HB 154 before the end of the session would bring an end to our bill.

Our testimony before the Senate Transportation Committee on December 6 ended in a unanimous approval. HB 154 passed the full Senate by a vote of 31-1 on December 8, the final day of the 2015-2016 Ohio General Assembly session. Governor Kasich signed HB 154 into law on December 19, ending a seven-year OBF effort which began with a bike ride to the Statehouse in 2009!
National Bike Summit—Washington DC

The League of American Bicyclists sponsors the National Bike Summit each year in Washington D.C. The National Bike Summit is where advocacy representatives gather every year to share our stories, to listen, to learn and use our voices on Capitol Hill to make bicycling better for all.

The League is the voice of millions of bicyclists nationwide. For more than 100 years, their programs and knowledge have propelled bicycling across America through our advocacy, promotion and education programs.

Monica Sakamoto, OBF Vice Chair and Communication Director attended and provided the following reports.

National Bike Summit - Trends and Federal Policy

March 6th - Optimistic Uncertainty was the key theme during the 2017 Summit: LAB is moving and shaking, adapting to changes.

Changes on the Board and Elections - In February, The League of American Bicyclists board appointed longtime staff member Bill Nesper as interim executive director following the departure of Alex Doty. Nesper has been with the league 14 years, starting as a membership assistant and progressing to his most recent position as deputy director. He acknowledges external and internal challenges and has an optimistic view, welcoming help and enticing people to be nominated and serve. The League will soon announce elections. Members should expect continuity in the development of women. The new focus/process will be the development of Youth and LCI lower tier certification.

March 7 and 8th - LAB and Federal Policy

League of American Bicyclists Vice President for Government Relations Caron Whitaker is forming an independent consulting firm. Whitaker’s new firm will work part time for a new coalition between the League and Bike New York. This new coalition has not yet been officially named and may reapply the “Advocacy Advance” message. Whitaker describes the coalition as a project of the two organizations. Bike New York is contributing funding, the League is contributing its Voter Voice system, some staff time and resources, its national reach and existing resources.

The primary goals of this new coalition are to continue to bring the bicycling message to Congress and the federal government and to raise funds to keep the effort going ($200,000 annual budget). Although details about membership structure are still to be defined, other advocacy groups are welcome to join. The coalition also intends to secure continuity on emails, webinars, and other communication tools.

Next steps include securing advocacy support with districts visits and funding, and representing bicyclists as the Congress discusses infrastructure projects. The League and the coalition are looking ahead to the October 2017 federal budget window as they work to protect multimodal, bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Bill Nesper, interim executive director and Caron Whitaker, former Government Relations LAB VP

If you wish to continue to receive our OBF Communicator, please send the email address at which you would like to receive our newsletter to OBF Membership Director Ken Mercurio at kmerrc@yahoo.com.

To save trees and money, your OBF Communicator is now available in electronic newsletter format. Our OBF Ohio Bicycle Events Calendar will continue to be published in both electronic and paper form.
Simplifying, enabling, and rewarding Ride Leaders:

Both panelists and the audience highlighted the importance of refreshing and revisiting Brand Image, advertising, and safety practices. Most recommendations can be organized under three key fundamental pillars of Marketing: Build Brand Equity, Increasing number of users and increasing usage (frequency and volume).

Brand Equity:
Both panelists and the audience highlighted the importance of refreshing and revisiting Brand Image, developing a contemporary Brand Equity and Visual Identity. Refresh logo, visuals, messaging to appeal and engage younger demographics.

Increase your base: targeting to younger demographics by reaching college students, incorporating their ideas and work. Examples:
Offering internship or volunteer opportunity (social media, accounting, marketing, design, communications, etc.) Creating job description, project timeline, and assigning mentors
Bicycling 101 as extension classes: college catalog administrator can add the “Learn to Ride” syllabus added to catalog.
Offering more casual, slow paced and beginners rides for free: shut and easy flat rides.
Offering community outreach and services e.g. Street cleaning day; Helmet fitting day at schools.
Listening and changing some Police paradigms: e.g. educating police officers about LCI standards, cyclists hand signs, as well as road or touring riders needs. Most officers receive different, police - specific training e.g. ride on glass (!), uneven surfaces.
Engaging local businesses beyond Bike shops and eateries as sponsors, bringing or partnering with existing cause or funding bike advocacy (e.g. day care where moms need to drop their kids).
Developing National events/ rides: and offering temporary, 3-month trial membership for visitors

Simplifying, enabling, and rewarding Ride Leaders:

Simplify with no paperwork: Memphis Hightailers uses only online forms or social media (i.e. facebook private groups). Club members are invited to join the Club FB group, then the Ride FB group. Leaders receive real-time confirmation of riders (who log and confirm on the group page) and Leaders post ride after taking a picture at the end of the ride.

Rewarding Leaders and Sweepers: after publishing activities of leading, co-leading, or sweeping 12 rides/year or more earns a free jersey from the club

Online feedback forms to Director enables reporting, improves SOPs, and helps to address complaints,

Directors must drop leaders who are not reporting and following SOP; directors or captains are the backbones of the club

Multi-level leadership, from sweepers to experienced Leaders. Sweep is training and should be rewarded.
Ohio Bicycle Federation

OBF’s 3-Foot Passing Law Effective March 21, 2017!

Join below or online at www.ohiobike.org today!

Name: ____________________________________________
Address: ____________________________________________
City/State/Zip: _______________________________________
Phone: _____________________________________________
E-mail: _____________________________________________

Select Level
[ ]-years 1 $20 Single $25 Supporting or $50 Organizational $100 Sustaining $190 Lifetime $280
[ ]-years 2 $35 Single $45 $90 $135 $280
[ ]-years 3 $50 Single $65 $135 $280

Join or Renew at Supporting Level or above, and receive an OBF T-Shirt (specify size)!
Join or Renew at Sustaining Level or above, and also receive an Ohio to Erie Trail map!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Join us Sat., April 29, 2017 for our 4th “OBF Day at the Cleveland Velodrome.” All OBF members arriving at the Cleveland Velodrome by 10:30 am will receive free instruction in riding the velodrome on a track bike courtesy of Fast Track Cycling. Bring your helmet, pedals, and shoes. Cleveland Velodrome is at 5033 Broadway Ave (enter off Pershing).
Join us for our 12 Noon OBF meeting at Ohio City Bicycle Co-Op, 1840 Columbus Road in Cleveland.

Join us Tuesday, May 2, 2017 in the Ohio Statehouse Atrium for our 4th Annual OBF Ohio Bicycling Summit! For additional information go to https://obfbikesummit16.eventbrite.com

Join us Saturday, Oct 7, 2017 for OBF Day at the Bicycle Museum of America, 7 West Monroe Street, New Bremen, Ohio! OBF members admitted free to museum! Free tours 10 am to Noon. OBF meets from Noon to 2 pm!

(left to right) OBF Chair Chuck Smith, House Bill 154 sponsor Rep. Mike Henne, and seven-time Tour de France rider Frankie Andreu promote House Bill 154 during 2016 “Ride for Respect.”

OBF’s HB 154:

1. Defines “safe distance” for Ohio motorists passing bicyclists as 3 feet.
2. Permits all Ohio vehicles to proceed through an intersection after stopping and yielding right-or-way when not detected by the device meant to move the signal from red to green.

SAME ROADS • SAME RIGHTS • SAME RULES ™