S.2757 (Ramos) / A.6748 (Jackson)

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S.2757 (Ramos) / A.6748 (Jackson)

SUBJECT

Expands the Allowable Width of E-bikes

DATE

May 20, 2021

SUPPORT

The Business Council of New York State, the state's leading statewide business and industry association, supports this legislation that would authorize the expansion of the width of e-bikes and the sharing of anonymized trip and user demographic data with municipalities for the purpose of managing the public right of way.

In early 2020 New York City Department of Transportation created a commercial cargo e-bike pilot program. This program has proven so popular and successful that New York City will be codifying the terms of the pilot into regulations. However, state-level provisions adopted as part of the FY 2021 budget restricted the width of bikes to 36 inches making New York the only state in the nation to establish width requirements.

This legislation would rectify that oversight and expand the width guidelines to 55 inches.

There are several important reasons to support this legislation and increase the allowable width of e-bikes. As in the pilot program, the expansion of e-bike usage would decrease congestion and curb space impact in New York City, particularly the so-called "last mile" where deliveries reach their destination, and the wider width bike would make them a more viable alternative for a greater range of deliveries. Likewise, with the reduction in cars, vans, and trucks, there is a corresponding reduction in environmental impact with the expanded use of e-bikes. With regard to economic impact, the expansion would spur employment, particularly for those without driver's licenses. The expansion would also directly benefit small businesses and those seeking an alternative to delivery charges or fees.

For the above reasons, The Business Council supports this legislation and urges its approval before conclusion of the 2021 legislative session.