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**New York Bicycling Coalition STRONGLY SUPPORTS
A233 (Gantt) / S997 (Dilan)**

AN ACT which amends the vehicle and traffic law in relation to the definition of electric assisted bicycles; establishes that electric assisted bicycles, as defined, are bicycles, not motor vehicles; and establishes safety and operational criteria for their use.

In 2002, federal law was amended to distinguish bicycles with low-power electric motors capable of reaching speeds of 20 mph or less, from motorcycles, mopeds, and motor vehicles. The NYS Legislature never enacted a conforming update to state law. Though it is completely legal to sell electric bicycles in New York under federal law, state law makes it illegal to operate these bikes on public roadways. If New York is to become a more bicycle-friendly state, the legal muddle around electric bicycles must be clarified.

New York Bicycling Coalition supports a legal definition of electric assist bicycles (EABs) that conforms with the proposed definition in A233/S997.

NYBC believes that electric assist bicycles should be regulated the same as traditional bicycles, in accordance with current NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law for bicycles.

Electric assist bicycles get more people biking and biking more often, and:

1. EABs are designed to be as safe as traditional bicycles, and their widespread use in the U.S. and other countries has not compromised consumer safety.
2. EABs benefit new bicyclists who may be discouraged from riding a traditional bicycle due to limited physical fitness, age, disability and/or convenience.
3. EABs can serve as a “gateway” to traditional, self-propelled bicycling and are not in any way an impediment to fully self-propelled bicycling.
4. EABs use green battery technology and would be an important addition to New York’s growing energy-efficient transportation system.
5. EABs benefit small business owners by providing a cost-effective alternative to cars and trucks when used for equipment transport and deliveries.

New York Bicycling Coalition represents over 10,000 cyclists in New York State including bicycle clubs, bike shops, event organizers, tour operators, tourism agencies and bicycle advocates. On behalf of our members across the state, we strongly encourage the passage of this bill.