

NEW JERSEY E-BIKE LAW

BIKE SHOP ADVOCACY TALKING POINTS



PURPOSE: Provide clear talking points for meetings with legislators, mayors, chambers of commerce, police departments, media, and community leaders.

1. The Core Problem

The new 2026 law (R.S.39:1-1) was intended to address safety concerns around **high-speed electric motorcycles (“e-motos”)**, but it **sweeps low-speed e-bicycles into the same regulatory framework.**

Key issue:

The law eliminates the distinction between:

- **Low-speed electric bicycles (formerly Class 1 & 2), and**
- **High-speed electric motorcycles capable of motorcycle-level speeds**



As a result, **responsible riders and small businesses are being burdened without solving the real safety problem.**

2. Who This Law Is Affecting

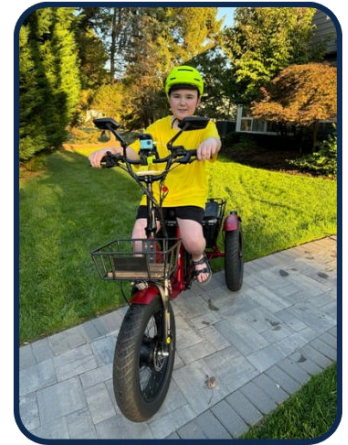
Disabled Riders

Low-speed e-bikes and e-trikes are essential mobility devices for many people with disabilities, including riders with:

- Autism
- Stroke recovery
- Cerebral palsy
- Multiple sclerosis
- Balance and mobility limitations

Many of these individuals **cannot obtain a driver's license but can safely operate a low-speed e-bike or e-trike.**

For them, these devices are **mobility and independence tools—not recreational toys.**



Families

E-bikes allow families to replace car trips with a safe, practical alternative for daily life.

Many parents rely on cargo-style e-bikes to transport children to:

- school and daycare
- activities and appointments
- errands and local trips

These bikes provide a **cost-effective, accessible transportation option** in communities where owning and operating a car is not feasible.



Car-Free Riders

Many New Jersey residents rely on e-bikes as a **primary alternative to owning a car**, especially in areas where public transportation does not meet daily needs.

E-bikes allow people to:

- get to work and maintain employment
- access essential services
- remain independent without the cost of a vehicle

For these riders, e-bikes are not optional—they are a **necessary and practical form of transportation**.



Seniors

E-bikes allow older adults to remain active and independent, even after hip replacements, knee replacements, balance limitations, and other medical conditions. They provide **pedal assistance**, reducing strain on joints while still allowing meaningful physical activity.

E-bikes help seniors maintain cardiovascular health through low-impact exercise, ride with confidence despite reduced strength or endurance, safely navigate longer distances and moderate terrain, and continue participating in social and outdoor activities

Many older adults also **choose e-bikes and e-trikes as a safer alternative to driving**. For some, transitioning from driving to e-bikes or e-trikes is a **proactive safety decision**—one that keeps them mobile while reducing risk to themselves and others.

E-bikes allow people to **continue cycling safely rather than giving up riding entirely**, supporting both physical health and overall quality of life.



Veterans

Many military veterans rely on e-bikes and e-trikes as part of **rehabilitation and recovery from service-related injuries**.

These bikes help veterans:

- stay physically active during recovery
- manage PTSD through outdoor activity
- maintain independence after orthopedic injuries

For some veterans, e-bikes are **their primary form of transportation and community access**.



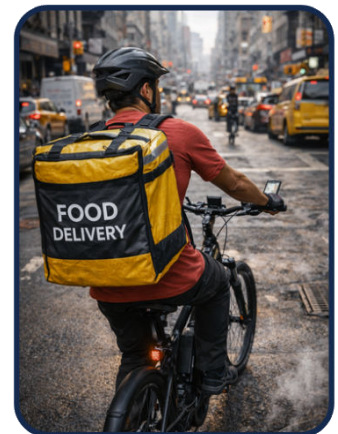
Delivery Workers

Across New Jersey—especially in dense downtowns and shore communities—many delivery workers rely on e-bikes to **complete jobs efficiently and safely**.

E-bikes enable workers to navigate traffic and congested areas, complete deliveries quickly and reliably, and access areas where cars are impractical

These riders are a critical part of restaurant delivery operations, grocery and convenience delivery, and local small business logistics.

For many, e-bikes are not optional—they are the **tool that makes their work possible**.



Tourism & Local Economies

E-bikes are widely used in New Jersey's shore and tourism communities as a **practical and accessible way to get around**.

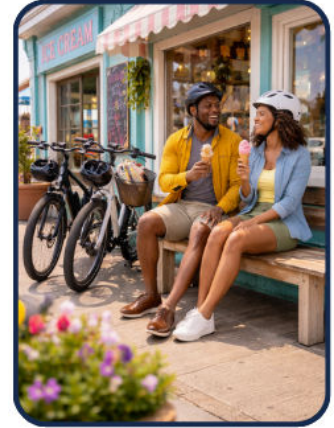
Visitors and seasonal residents rely on e-bikes to travel between beaches, shops, and restaurants, access areas where parking is limited, and move easily through high-traffic destinations.

Local businesses depend on this mobility:

- bike rental operations
- restaurants and retail shops
- tourism-driven small businesses

Unclear or restrictive rules create confusion for visitors and rental operators, particularly for those traveling from out of state. This uncertainty discourages participation and reduces economic activity in shore communities.

For many shore towns, **e-bikes are not just transportation—they are a core part of how visitors experience, access, and move through the community.**



3. Outdoor Recreation & Trail Access

The law may also create **unintended consequences for outdoor recreation.**

Electric mountain bikes (e-MTBs) are widely used by:

- aging riders extending their riding years
- athletes recovering from injuries
- mixed-ability riding groups

Because the law classifies certain e-bikes as motor vehicles, it may create **uncertainty about access to trails on state-managed public lands.**

This affects the **growing mountain bike community and the outdoor recreation economy.**



4. The Real Safety Issue

The safety concerns driving this law involve **high-powered electric motorcycles (“e-motos”)**. e-Motorcycles:

- reach **40–60+ mph**
- can **lack functional pedals**
- are frequently marketed to teenagers
- are often used illegally on roads, sidewalks, and trails

These vehicles are **not e-bikes.**



5. Economic Impact

Bike shops across New Jersey are already experiencing:

- customers delaying purchases
- riders unsure whether bikes will remain legal
- stalled sales and business uncertainty
- tourism communities concerned about rental impacts

Many independent bike shops rely heavily on e-bike sales to stay viable.



Uncertainty surrounding this law is already **affecting small businesses statewide.**

6. Regulatory Confusion

The law created widespread confusion regarding:

- driver's license requirements
- insurance requirements
- registration requirements
- enforcement procedures

Police departments, riders, and retailers are receiving **conflicting interpretations**, leaving businesses unable to advise customers responsibly.



This uncertainty has created **fear, stalled sales, and economic disruption.**

7. What a Reasonable Fix Looks Like

Define Two Clear Categories

1. Low-Speed E-Bikes (Under 20 mph)

- Treat low-speed e-bikes as bicycles
- No licensing, registration, or insurance requirements

2. High-Speed Electric Vehicles (Above 20 mph)

- Create a separate category for higher-speed motorized electric vehicles
- Apply regulations appropriate to their speed and risk
- Focus enforcement on speed and reckless operation



8. What Policymakers Can Do

1. Define **low-speed e-bikes (under 20 mph) as bicycles**, eliminating any licensing, registration, and insurance requirements.
2. Create and regulate a **separate category for higher-speed motorized electric vehicles (above 20 mph)**.
3. Target enforcement toward **vehicles and riders causing actual safety concerns**
4. Provide **clear implementation guidance** for riders and businesses
5. Work with **industry experts, retailers, and advocates** to amend the law



9. Simple Summary

The current 2026 law (R.S.39:1-1) unintentionally regulates **low-speed e-bikes used for mobility, commuting, rehabilitation, and recreation as if they were high-speed electric motorcycles**. This harms **disabled riders, veterans, seniors, workers, outdoor recreation users, and small businesses** without addressing the real safety problem.