

Those supporting the ban say:

COMMENTS FROM PETITIONERS:

I don't know why they feel they have the right to the roads when they pay no license or registration fees to ride them.

Licensing and registration are two different issues but boil down to the same thing – taxes. I know of no adult bicyclist who does not possess a driver's license (if they can obtain one. Some cannot because of legal or medical issues). So the argument that bicyclists are unlicensed is not true. But there is no license requirement. On the registration, one must look very carefully at how roads are paid for. Our current taxation system requires a tax to be paid based upon fuel consumption. Higher efficiency pays less taxes and lower efficiency pays more taxes. The system encourages the use of bicycling because of less wear and tear on the road surfaces. Our public right-of-way has always been free for the common citizen to move about using non-motorized transportation.

I have a hard time understanding why the citizens pay extra taxes to build trails for this type of recreation, when the trails are not used by the very people who requested them in the first place.

Trails serve many purposes. They can be used as bikeways and walkways. They can provide permanent land conservation. They can increase property values and provide connectivity of communities. With only 1,500 miles of trail in the entire state, they don't connect everywhere. If I used the trail to get to work, I would ride about 2.5 miles further than what I need to. Like driving, I pick the most efficient route when I want to use my bike for transportation.

Coping with a bike at 55 mph is hugely different than coping with the same bike in town at 25 mph.

Yes and no. Rural roadways have been engineered and constructed with increased sight and braking distances. Bicyclists getting run over because cars don't have the time to stop are a rare occurrence. A motorist should be prepared to yield to unsafe traffic conditions at anytime.

There is a minimum speed limit for motor vehicles on roadways for safety reasons. If a slow moving car is a safety hazard, so is a bike.

This is a myth. There is no minimum speed except on Interstate Highways.

These roads are hilly and a very poor spot to ride.

There are two situations with hills and this argument shows incorrect assumptions on the motorist in both. 1. "I came overtop a hill and there was the bicyclist." Bicyclists travel at a much higher rate of speed going downhill. There usually isn't an issue.

2. "I met a cyclist traveling uphill and couldn't pass." Iowa's no passing zones are strictly enforced and for a good reason. It is important to everyone to pass safely. The cyclist is operating lawfully, so the motorist must make the safest decision for action.

I mean no disrespect to avid cyclists but my farming family deserves to be able to safely traverse farm-to-market roads in order to pursue their livelihood and support their families even if it is at the sake of leisure time cyclists having to find alternate routes.

Our public roadways are owned by the people and not individuals. People travel for many different reasons: soccer practice, scenic tours, socialize with neighbors, and more. We have never placed a restriction on how people can use the public roads or travel. There are constitutional implications to restriction of travel.

If bicycles use the roads they should be required to provide proof of insurance.

Motorists are required to have financial responsibility by law. Cyclists have no such responsibility. However, cycling does not have large sums of dollars attributed to aggregate damage. We also do not have issues with uninsured and underinsured operators like motor vehicle operators were. In fact, most bicyclists are covered under personal liability policies in homeowners insurance.

Those opposing the ban say:

COMMENTS FROM PETITIONERS:

In an era when gasoline prices are high and when the carbon footprint of everyone is an issue, it is completely without reason to ban one of the means of transportation which might alleviate some of these problems.

While bicycling could alleviate people being a pinch for gasoline, how many of those people are actually riding bikes? Are there enough people riding bikes, instead of driving cars, to make an environmental difference?

This is a ridiculous proposal in light of the fact that the state reaps something like \$24 million a year from bicyclists using our roads!

This number comes from an Iowa Bicycle Coalition review of the amount of money RAGBRAI brings in each year. The CFSC has never said RAGBRAI is a bad thing. It's a sanctioned event with a prescribed route, law enforcement and traffic control. We believe you should hold RAGBRAI, as long as it is policed and done professionally, and riders stick to the routes.

I get really upset when I hear the argument that there are enough trails for bikers to ride on. Whoever says that should look at a map of Iowa. Bikers will very rarely be able to go from point A to point B using the trails. So how would they bike to the store or to a friend's house?

It is true that trails don't go to every single place – that is physically impossible. But using a comparison, if my hobby was boating, I'd have to drive my boat to the lake because I don't have a waterway that takes me from my house to the lake.

There is a distinction between a recreational purpose and functional purpose, such as riding to work, going through town or to the grocery store. In that regard, the legislature may have to do an evaluation of highways to deem which specific roads or types of roads are safe for bikes and which aren't.

If motorists and cyclists drive and ride responsibly and safely, the only drawback is that motorists might lose a few seconds in their travel time when they encounter cyclists on the road.

This argument is not about convenience, it's about safety. Accidents happen and nobody would ever want to hit a bicyclist. Nobody is out there trying to hit a bicyclist. Not only would it ruin the bicyclist's life, it would ruin the motorist's life. Forever. Nobody wants that.

Bike riding is not just a hobby. I would hope that Iowans would recognize it as a legitimate means of transportation.

No debate.

Everyone comments that cyclists do not pay road taxes. But every cyclist I know owns an automobile too. Therefore, I and other cyclists pay for the right to use the roads as we wish.

Bicyclists don't pay fees on their bicycles for registrations and license. When they are using the road, they aren't paying for the road. If bicyclists want bicycles to be treated like motor vehicles, they must pay, just like motor vehicles must.

Cyclists (like drivers) also have the full rights and obligations to follow and obey all rules of county and state roadways.

They do have those obligations and should be ticketed each time they don't obey the rules.