

From the desk of....

Are they crazy????

I've been traveling quite a bit recently back and forth from Richmond to Newport News and back on family business. I-64 is my "favorite" road these days. However I apparently missed a new law in the state despite the fact that we are participating in a DMV study on whether or not to legalize the practice of lane splitting by motorcyclists.

Lane splitting is the practice of motorcyclists riding "on" the dotted line between traffic lanes. No matter how fast or slow the traffic, I'm constantly surprised when the motorcyclist whizzes by me. I think I keep a good eye out on the traffic around me....including behind me.... But I'm frequently exclaiming, "Where the !@#!% did they come from???"

If you don't know what lane splitting is or lane filtering.....do what I did and go to YouTube and search for "lane filtering" and you'll know right away.

The motorcyclist groups argue that lane splitting/filtering should be allowed at low speeds because its: A safety issue, an economic issue and environmental issue. I'm waiting for the Sierra Club lobbyist to show up in support of the proposed legislation.

Legislation was indeed introduced at the General Assembly last year that would have allowed lane filtering/splitting at slow to stopped traffic speeds. The legislation failed in subcommittee on a tie vote - 3 to 3. It is only allowable in about three to four states now and has been presented and opposed recently in numerous states. Frequently miss-citing a California study which showed the practice as safe....when actually it said that it was only safe at slow to stopped traffic speeds. The question also should be raised that is the practice that prevalent that you can obtain statistical validity in the findings? The insurance industry doesn't think so because there is no data on the frequency or severity of motorcycle accidents specifically related to lane filtering or splitting.

But what say you? Send me an email on your opinion of this practice to Rbradshaw@iiav.com. Let me know if you are in favour of allowing lane splitting/filtering and additionally if you ride motorcycles or not.

Depending on the outcome of this DMV study....be prepared to contact your state senator and delegate on how you feel about this.

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