

Rebate incentive for e-bike owners can bridge socio-economic divide and sustainable transportation investment

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Credit: Virginia Tech

Efforts to establish a rebate program for D.C. area residents and businesses to acquire electric bicycles will help incentivize more

sustainable transport as well as regional investment into sustainable transportation infrastructure, says Virginia Tech urban planning and transportation expert Ralph Buehler.

The bill, known as the Electric Bicycle Incentive Kickstarting the Environment ("E-BIKE") Act of 2023, will provide [financial support](#) for individuals to invest in e-bikes and increase accessibility in ridership and destination areas.

Buehler says the program can help reduce the significant cost of e-bikes, in particular for lower-income individuals with higher cost compared to their income.

"E-bikes and e-cargo bikes allow riders to travel longer distances and exert less effort than riding regular bikes. This can help increase accessibility to jobs, [grocery stores](#), and other destinations," said Buehler.

"Increasing e-bike ridership can be one more piece in the puzzle to make [urban transport](#) in the District more sustainable," said Buehler. "Many trips currently made by car are shorter than 3 miles, which can easily be covered by bicycling."

Buehler says that by incentivizing the purchase of e-bikes, the District would follow examples set in other cities European cities such as France, Belgium, or Germany and other U.S. cities like Denver.

"It seems likely that cycling levels will remain higher in the coming years due to new infrastructure, new habits, and exposure of new groups to cycling," said Buehler. "While walking rates are roughly the same for men and women, cycling remains highest among white, higher-income males. In fact, three times more men than women are likely to cycle."

Provided by Virginia Tech

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