

MOTORIZED BICYCLE BILL SEEKS TO CLARIFY ENGINE POWER

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[Update as of 2/23/2013, HB2177 has not been assigned to any committee which I imagine means it is dead]

It's the start of a new legislative season in Arizona, the 51st Regular session, for those keeping track. (find other bills of interest with the [legislation](#) tag)

Readers of these pages will note that the laws in AZ regarding motorized bicycles are muddled. Worse yet, some police have used [this muddle to unfairly punish motorized bicyclists](#), for example causing arrest and large fines for "speeding" at 21mph; others have uses a hash of local "[play vehicle](#)" ordinances to harass otherwise legally operating motorized bicyclists. These results, it seems to me, were NOT the legislative intent of the 2006 law defining motorized bicycles.

The bill, below, addresses none of this — it merely replaces the engine power clause, changing

from: maximum piston displacement of forty-eight cubic centimeters or less

to: POWER OUTPUT OF NO MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND WATTS OR ONE AND THREE-TENTHS HORSEPOWER

[HB2177](#) electric bicycles; gas bicycles; definition

I have no idea where this bill came from, its sole sponsor is Karen Fann (R-District 1 / Prescott), she is chairperson of the House Tran Committee so presumably this bill is going to move.

The muddle notwithstanding — I'm curious about the choice of 1,000Watts, and for that matter, the choice of 1.3hp. I imagine the number was chosen to approximate the electrical equivalent of 1.3hp (i.e. 1 horsepower is equivalent theoretically to about 746Watts, often rounded to 750. That would make 1,000W equivalent to 1.33hp)

It would seem to me to make more sense to conform to the [CPSC definition of "low speed electric bicycle"](#), 750Watts. On the other hand, some other states have the 1,000 limit already, e.g. CA.

Fix the Muddle!

My ideas for addressing the muddle are [here](#), and revolve around replacing the “operated at” language to “capable of propelling the device at”-type language; a la CA.