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# MEDIA STATEMENT

Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

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## **Queensland Transport Minister declares “open season” on bicycle and scooter riders**

Police are to be armed with a weapon of mass destruction to deal with the “problem” of people cycling and scootering on footpaths (instead of driving) – via a new \$6,192 fine for bicycle and scooter riders travelling on a footpath.

Here's the new section to be inserted in the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*.

### *84AA Driving particular vehicles without due care and attention on road-related areas*

*A person who drives a bicycle or personal mobility device on a road-related area without due care and attention or without reasonable consideration for another person using the road-related area is guilty of an offence.*

*Maximum penalty - 40 penalty units.*

Brisbane CBD BUG spokesman Paul French said that while the Minister has tried to disguise his oppressive new fine regime as making riders “equally culpable in the same way that every other road user is” - this totally misrepresented the vastly different circumstances and risks faced by riders compared to motorists.

The ridiculousness of these fines was pointed out by Mr French who said that unlike motorists who are protected from injury in crash by a massive glass and steel cage and air bags, bicycle riders are just as likely to be injured in crash with a pedestrian - and so already have a much greater motivation than motorists not to cause a crash. Another key point of difference is that unlike motor vehicles, e-bikes and e-scooters must be speed-limited.

He went on to say that as this new rule only applies to bicycle and scooter riders, with many having to ride on the footpath because this is either required by law or do so for their own safety because the road is too dangerous, they will now face even more onerous legal conditions than car drivers.

One of the very few concessions for bicycle riders in Queensland is that in contrast to most other states and territories – this state’s road rules allow people to cycle on the footpath. Many motorists like this because it gets bicycle riders out of their way. But a likely outcome of this ill-considered rule change is it may encourage riders back onto Queensland’s dangerous roads. The introduction of this draconian new fine means many riders are now discussing if riding is worth it.

A major worry for riders is they can receive this fine even if they haven’t been in a crash. Unlike speeding offences that police have to measure via regularly calibrated equipment the application of this new fine is entirely open to the subjective judgement of police - and can be handed out for any reason they deem fit e.g. simply riding past a pedestrian on a path. When a rider is given this infringement, they will have to go to court to challenge it, with all the associated costs and concern.

Riders should not be fooled into thinking Queensland Police won’t abuse this new rule said Mr French, as only last month on World Car Free Day they were handing out \$464 fines to riders for travelling at just 26km/h across the Kurilpa Bridge— despite this bridge typically being very quiet with not a single crash on being recorded on it in police data.