

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 970

Short Title: E-Bike Definition and Local Regulation. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Lee and Lazzara (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

May 4, 2026

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO CLARIFY THE DEFINITION OF ELECTRIC ASSISTED BICYCLE AND TO
3 AUTHORIZE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REGULATION.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 20-4.01(7a) reads as rewritten:

6 "(7a) Electric Assisted Bicycle. – A bicycle with two or three wheels that is
7 equipped with a seat or saddle for use by the rider, fully operable pedals for
8 human propulsion, and an electric motor of no more than 750 ~~watts, whose~~
9 ~~maximum speed on a level surface when powered solely by such a motor is~~
10 ~~no greater than 20 miles per hour.~~ watts that meets the requirements of one of
11 the following three classes:

- 12 a. Class 1 electric assisted bicycle. – A bicycle equipped with a motor
13 that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to
14 assist once the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour.
15 b. Class 2 electric assisted bicycle. – A bicycle equipped with a motor
16 that may propel the bicycle without pedaling but ceases to assist once
17 the bicycle reaches a speed of 20 miles per hour.
18 c. Class 3 electric assisted bicycle. – A bicycle equipped with a motor
19 that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to
20 assist once the bicycle reaches a speed of 28 miles per hour."

21 **SECTION 2.** Article 3 of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes is amended by adding
22 a new section to read:

23 **"§ 20-171.3. Electric bicycles.**

24 (a) Except as otherwise provided in G.S. 160A-300.2 and G.S. 153A-245.1, the operation
25 of an electric assisted bicycle as defined in G.S. 20-4.01 shall be permitted on all roadways,
26 bicycle lanes, and shared-use paths.

27 (b) A person under the age of 18 operating or riding as a passenger on a Class 3 electric
28 assisted bicycle shall wear a helmet that meets federal safety standards."

29 **SECTION 3.(a)** Article 15 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes is amended by
30 adding a new section to read:

31 **"§ 160A-300.2. Electric bicycles.**

32 (a) A city may regulate the use of electric assisted bicycles on any street, road, or highway
33 within municipal limits. This authority shall include the following:

- 34 (1) Restricting the use of a class or classes of electric assisted bicycles on multiuse
35 paths, sidewalks, or trails.
36 (2) Establishing speed limits on greenways or shared-use paths.



1 (b) A city may require the use of a helmet by a person under the age of 18 operating or
2 riding as a passenger on a Class 1 or Class 2 electric assisted bicycle.

3 (c) A city may impose penalties for violations of this section."

4 **SECTION 3.(b)** Article 12 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes is amended by
5 adding a new section to read:

6 **"§ 153A-245.1. Regulation of electric bicycles.**

7 A county may regulate the use of an electric assisted bicycle in accordance with
8 G.S. 160A-300.2. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to restrict or repeal the authority of a
9 city to regulate the use of an electric assisted bicycle."

10 **SECTION 4.** The Department of Transportation shall develop educational materials
11 on the proper use and safety considerations of electric assisted bicycles.

12 **SECTION 5.** There is appropriated from the Highway Fund to the Department of
13 Transportation the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in nonrecurring funds for the
14 2026-2027 fiscal year to be used to implement Section 4 of this act.

15 **SECTION 6.** This act is effective when it becomes law and applies to all electric
16 assisted bicycle riders and passengers on or after that date.