

“Ride in Paradise Zach”

The following essay was Zach’s final major research writing assignment for this Analyzing and Writing Arguments class at Hawaii Pacific University (HPU). It was written a few weeks before the accident on December 17, 2010, which ended his life. According to his instructor, they had many in-class discussions and Zach probably chose to write on this subject because it was important to him and because he thought genuine progress could be made on the issue.

Although cycling was new to Zach, he was passionate about riding, and learned all he could about the sport. More than just an activity, he saw it as a great form of exercise, recreation, transportation and positive impact for a cleaner environment.

Our family hopes Zach’s premature death will raise awareness of cyclists in our community and that many will rise up to be that voice to promote safety on our roads and a Bike Friendly Hawaii.

Ride Aloha & Drive Aloha,
Dennis & Daphne Manago
Zach’s parents
and his extended family and friends

Should There Be More Bicycle Lanes in the State of Hawaii

Written by Zachary Manago
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The majority of the people in Hawaii have ridden a bicycle or tricycle sometime in their life. As a kid, bicycles were lots of fun because you got to go fast on them, play cops and robbers with your friends, or just a way to get out of the house. Some people continue to ride their bicycle until they are a teenager, and some continue to ride their bicycle until they can no longer get on a bicycle. There are many reasons why people choose to ride bicycles: good source of exercise, transportation, concern about our environment or just a way to have fun. Now days, people tend to ride or buy a bicycle because of the inflated gas prices, insane traffic, or are worried about our environment. With the bicycle becoming an alternative to automobiles and just becoming more popular in general today, should there be more bicycle lanes in the state of Hawaii? Some say there should be more bicycle lanes and some say there should not be any more bicycle lanes. There are both positive and negative outcomes to producing more bicycle lanes in the state of Hawaii. With more bicycle lanes in Hawaii, cyclists will actually use those lanes and feel much safer while riding their bicycle because they will have their own lane to themselves and will not have to worry about other automobiles. There is also another side saying that with more bicycle lanes, it will create more traffic on our streets because the bicycle lane will take up that much more of the road. Is this statement true? In my opinion, increasing the amount of bicycle lanes in the state of Hawaii will have a positive outcome rather than a negative outcome because cyclists will feel safer while riding their bicycles in their designated lane, it will prevent less traffic on our roads, and there will be a decrease of fatalities due to cyclists getting hit by automobiles.

Some people may ask the question, are bicycle lanes even safe? Put it this way -- if you are riding your bicycle on the road without a bicycle lane and traveling slower than the normal speed of traffic, the law says "bicyclists are to ride as close to the right hand curb or on the shoulder of

roadway, as practical". If you are riding your bicycle, you better hope that the lane is somewhat big, because if it is narrow you will be a foot or even inches away from cars whizzing right past you and there is a chance of you getting sideswiped by one of those cars. Now with a bicycle lane, you will own that entire bicycle lane that has white lines to create a boundary between you and the automobiles. There will also be a good and comfortable amount of space for you to ride in. Riding in the bicycle lane will not only make you feel safer, but also keep you safer in general because of the fact you do not have to worry about sharing the same lane with automobiles and some of them sideswiping you half the time just to get by you. Of course there is still a chance you can get hit by an automobile while riding in the bicycle lane, but the chances of you getting hit by an automobile decreases because you will have your own lane to ride in and you will not have to worry about sharing the same lane with automobiles. That is why bicycle lanes are a much safer alternative than riding your bicycle on the road and having to share a single lane with an automobile.

Many people may state that "No one ever uses bicycle lanes". Other may say that cyclists belong on the sidewalk and not on the street. Well, riding on the sidewalk is just as dangerous as riding on the road because there are many pedestrians that are walking on the sidewalks. What if one day you were riding your bicycle on the sidewalk and you accidentally ran into a pedestrian? The chances of you hitting a pedestrian while riding your bicycle on the sidewalk is much higher than you riding your bicycle on the road and getting struck by an automobile. Being a pedestrian and cyclist myself, I would not want to be dodging cyclists riding on the sidewalks in downtown Honolulu and I would not want to be weaving through pedestrians on the sidewalks. Yes, cyclists do have a better chance of getting struck by a car while riding their bicycle on the street than riding on the sidewalk. That is where bicycle lanes come into play. The bicycle lane will create a barrier between you and automobiles causing you to feel much safer while riding your bicycle.

In the years 2001-2006, the state of Hawaii had the second highest bicyclist's fatality rate in all of America. According to Dan Carlos, of the Hawaii Department of Health, "In the years 2001-2006, there were a total of 231 non fatal injuries to bicyclists and 20 deaths in Honolulu alone". Just in the year of 2010, there were two cyclists that were killed by automobiles in the same area in a matter of three months. One was killed by a Robert's Hawaii tour bus and the other was killed by a car; both of their deaths were preventable. Lots of drivers on the road today believe that cyclists do not have the right to share or be on the same road as automobiles. Their awareness levels of cyclists are not that strong because that is one of the last things people think of when they are driving on the road. That is why bicycle lanes will be much safer for cyclists and people who drive automobiles. An online scholarly source stated "Cycle lanes therefore will decrease the speed of moving vehicles due to drivers being aware that there is in fact a cycle lane and there may be a cyclist occupying that lane" (Gardner). Both of the cyclists were not in marked bicycle lanes and were sharing the road with other automobiles. Now if the two cyclists were in designated bicycle lanes, would they still be alive today? Most definitely, because they would have had their own lane to ride in and not had to share a lane with any type of automobiles, especially those oversized tour buses that are very popular here in Hawaii. Drivers should be more aware of cyclists now days because it is increasing in popularity and there are not many bicycle lanes here in Hawaii; meaning drivers will have to share the road with cyclists.

With more bicycle lanes in Hawaii, people will feel much safer while riding their bicycles on the road. Now does this mean more bicycle lanes in Hawaii will increase the popularity of bicycles? There are many people today that really want to get into bicycles for exercise or just to ride long distances but are afraid of getting hit by an automobile while riding and sharing the road with them. With more bicycles lanes in our state of Hawaii, there will be an increase of cyclists

because now the people who were afraid to share and ride on the road with other automobiles will have their own, designated lane for them to use. It will make the new and even older cyclists feel that much safer and confident while riding their bicycle. Bicycle messenger from Crosstown Couriers, Sau Hsu, stated "Bicycle lanes will totally make biking much more popular because cyclists will not have to worry about sharing a single lane with a car or even a tour bus. Not to mention it will make riding your bicycle that much more fun and a greater experience since you do not have to worry about cars flying pass you". Coming from a bicycle messenger, who rides his bicycle everyday as his job, gives us even more reasons why we should install new and more bicycle lanes here in our state of Hawaii.

Bicycle lanes are located all over the world ... from the United States, all the way to Japan and other foreign countries. Here on Oahu, we have approximately ten bicycle lanes or routes that are around our island. We have bicycle lanes in the Honolulu area, Windward area, and also North Shore area. Are ten bicycle lanes enough for our island? Our island may seem small on the map but when you live here, it is heavily congested with automobiles and other structures.

We have lots of room on this island to install more bicycle lanes. The bicycle lanes will not only be used for recreational use, but also for commuters who might ride their bicycle to school or to work. For example, I say the state of Hawaii should put a bicycle lane underneath the Queen Liliuokalani Freeway, Nimitz Highway, going both directions. The reason for this is because being a cyclist myself; there is nowhere but the road to ride my bicycle on. There is no bicycle lane and, not to mention people driving their automobiles at high rates of speed. I feel very unsafe and vulnerable to getting struck by an automobile. Now if we install a bicycle lane on the entire Nimitz Highway, other cyclists and I will feel a lot safer riding and will not have to worry so much about getting struck by an automobile.

With more bicycle lanes on our roads, that means more cyclists and fewer cars. Everything now days is about "going green" and trying to preserve Hawaii's environment. Cars are not helping Hawaii's environment get any better. According to Dr. Vukan R. Vuchic, "Since much pollution is caused while traffic is slowed or stalled due to congestion, many people mistakenly think that this pollution can be prevented by decreasing congestion. Unfortunately that does not work, as every attempt to facilitate traffic flow simply results in more traffic. This topic has been studied exhaustively." Bicycles are so much more efficient than cars. Here are some facts on how bicycles are much more efficient and environmental friendly than automobiles. Car emissions kill an average of 30,000 people a year in the U.S. alone. Using a bicycle to commute four days a week for four miles one way, saves 54 gallons of gas annually. SUVs put out 43% more global-warming pollutants, 28 pounds of carbon dioxide per gallon of gas consumed, and 47% more air pollution than the average car. The energy and resources needed to build one medium-sized car could produce 100 bicycles. These are only a few example of how bicycles can be much more environmental friendly than automobiles. With more bicycles in Hawaii and less automobiles being operated, we can make Hawaii have that much cleaner air for everyone to breath, fresher fresh water, and overall just a better environment. That is why we need to be producing more bicycle lanes in the state of Hawaii.

There will not only be benefits for cyclists if more bicycle lanes are installed in Hawaii but with more bicycle lanes in Hawaii, that means more people will want to ride their bicycles to work or just around town. When this happens, it will help decrease the terrible traffic problem we have here in Hawaii. Many people say that with more bicycle lanes, it will increase the amount of traffic because the bicycle lane is going to take up more of the road for automobiles. This is a completely false statement. An average bicycle lane width is about 1.5 to 2 meters, so it will not take that much

space from the road. Not only that, with more people riding their bicycle to work or where ever it maybe that means they will not be using their car. An online scholarly source stated that "In a group out of 1000 people, the average of people that will ride their bicycle to work or ride their bicycle for work related purposes was 28% and the rest will find another way of transportation to work" (Dill). Installing more bicycle lanes in our state of Hawaii will most likely decrease traffic since citizens will be more encouraged and confident to ride their bicycle wherever it maybe. On top of that, Hawaii is a very small and condensed place so everything is close or right next to each other; making riding a bicycle a much more practical thing to do. Bicycle lanes will not congest our road even more but provide a better solution for our traffic to decrease.

In conclusion, should there be more bicycle lanes here in the state of Hawaii? There are more cyclists on the roads than ever before today because of the high gas prices and bad economy. It will make more sense to put more bicycle lanes in Hawaii just for that one reason. Cyclists cannot be riding on the road all the time because sooner or later, one careless driver could end that cyclist's life because he or she had to share that single lane with an automobile. Bicycle lanes will make every cyclist feel that much safer while they are riding. Bicycle lanes will also decrease the fatalities and injuries due to cyclists getting hit by automobiles. Not only that, it will sure make lots of parents or families feel much safer about their family member riding their bicycle on the streets of Hawaii and not have to worry so much about them getting injured or even worse, killed. Bicycle lanes will not only encourage and increase the amount of cyclists on the roads but it will also help and lessen the pollution we have here in Hawaii. There are lots of people in Hawaii who are worried that they will get hit by an automobile while riding their bicycle. With a bicycle lane, they will feel that much safer riding their bicycles on the road and it will draw out a lot more cyclists here in Hawaii. With more cyclists on the roads, that means less pollution due to the cyclists not having to use their automobiles. Automobiles are one of the biggest causes of air pollution and pollution in general because it emits so much harmful toxins into our environment. With fewer automobiles on the road, it will help keep our environment clean for future generations and make tourists want to come back to Hawaii because of how clean and eco-friendly our environment and state is. More bicycle lanes in Hawaii will have a much greater outcome than a negative outcome. That is why the state of Hawaii should produce more bicycle lanes.