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**California Bicycle Coalition Calls for Free Rides
on Shared Bikes and Scooters for Essential Travel**

While Californians heed the extraordinary orders to maintain social distance, those who still have to travel risk spreading the virus if they normally rely on public transit and don't have an alternative. Shared bikes and scooters can provide safe mobility in this time of crisis. Governments and bike- and scooter-share companies should do everything they can to encourage this healthy mode of travel.

CalBike is calling for shared mobility providers to maintain their fleets and to make them free for new users who normally rely on transit and who need to travel for essential activities. CalBike commends the Breeze Bike Share system in Santa Monica for waiving all fees and the gruv system in Oakland and San Jose for providing a \$10 coupon and free rides for first responders, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and grocery store employees.

Bike use has boomed in cities around the world as people protect themselves and others from the coronavirus through social distancing. Some cities, like New York and Bogota, are building emergency protected bikeways to encourage the increase in bike use, and Copenhagen encourages people to switch from transit to bikes if possible.

This crisis shows the importance of shared micromobility and why cities should have more control over the systems, even if it means subsidizing the systems to support their operations when they are not profitable. They are as essential as public transit and provide redundancy to make our transportation system more resilient in the event of an emergency.

"There are many co-benefits of biking in addition to helping you avoid transit crowds. Sharing bikes and scooters after hand sanitizer and/or gloves affords protection. In addition, exercise is

crucial for physical and mental health. Sunlight boosts the immune system, and the UV in sunlight kills the CoVid virus. Drink lots of water and enjoy community while staying six feet away from anyone,” says Dr. David Pepper, a physician and public health educator based in Berkeley, California.

“It’s great to see so many sectors of society come together to accomplish this critical goal of slowing the pandemic. I’m proud of Californians, our political leaders, and those companies and their employees who are working to keep their fleets in service,” said Dave Snyder, Executive Director of the California Bicycle Coalition. “We’d love to see more, and urge mobility companies to continue to provide shared bikes and scooters for essential travel, including discounts and free service to new customers, especially people providing essential services.”

Every transit passenger who is able to switch to a bike or scooter makes it easier for other transit passengers to maintain social distance when they take the bus or train, Snyder said, adding that regardless of ridership declines on public transit, “public transit remains essential and should continue to operate at full strength to provide the necessary capacity to allow passengers to maintain social distance.”

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