

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 11 December 2019

Petition to get e-scooters off footpaths and keep pedestrians safe to be presented to Parliament

A petition to Government that would see e-scooters and other personal transport devices banned from New Zealand footpaths is to be presented to the Honorable Tracey Martin, Minister for Children and Seniors on Thursday, 12th December, at 1.00 pm on the steps of Parliament.

The petition was organised by Footpaths4feet, a coalition of 13 member organisations from across New Zealand, representing walkers, people who use mobility aids, older people and people with a range of sensory or cognitive impairments.

Coalition convener, Dr. Chris Teo-Sherrell says “Allowing these vehicles to be used on footpaths is incompatible with providing a safe and comfortable space for people to walk. People on foot deserve to feel safe just as people on bicycles and on scooters do. A third zone needs to be created for these vehicles.”

“Members of Footpaths4feet have been supporting the government in its efforts to make transport safer in New Zealand so allowing e-scooters on footpaths is a real kick in the shins for walkability and access for all.”

“We support the Government’s intention, in the forthcoming Accessible Streets package of road rule changes, to allow e-scooters to use cycle lanes but believe this should be mandatory where lanes exist. In low speed streets e-scooters can continue to be used in traffic lanes as can occur now. They should not be permitted on footpaths. Footpath speed limits and expectations of behaviour of scooter users are both unlikely to be observed and are unenforceable.”

“For many people on foot (including those with pushchairs or in wheelchairs), and especially for those people who have difficulty walking, hearing, seeing or mental processing, using the footpath is a necessity and their main connection to their community. If e-scooters and other personal transport devices are allowed on footpaths, these people, as well as able-bodied pedestrians, will be put at higher risk of injury and will feel less safe. ”

Teo-Sherrell says “While personal transport devices have a role to play in helping to cut transport carbon emissions, it’s common sense to understand that they need to be used in spaces that keep both pedestrians and riders safe.”

ENDS

For more information please contact

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Notes to media:

Footpaths4Feet is a coalition of 13 member organisations, including Living Streets Aotearoa, Grey Power, Disabled Persons Assembly, CCS Disability Action, Alzheimers NZ, Blind and Low Vision NZ, Deaf Action NZ, Association of Blind Citizens NZ, Health Action Trust, Age Concern, Dunedin Pedestrian Network, Retina NZ, Visual Impairment Charitable Trust Aotearoa NZ.