

**Statement of Courtney Griffin,
Director of Consumer Product Safety
for Consumer Federation of America
in Support of Bill 26-0244:
“Micromobility Fire Safety Standards Act of 2025”**

October 20, 2025

Chairperson Charles Allen and Councilmembers Christina Henderson,
Janeese Lewis George, and Zachary Parker:

My name is Courtney Griffin, and I am the Director of Consumer Product Safety for the Consumer Federation of America (CFA). Founded in 1968, CFA is one of the nation’s largest consumer organizations working in the consumer interest through research, advocacy and education. CFA represents over 200 national, state and local groups. I am submitting testimony on behalf of CFA in strong support of Bill 26-0244, the Micromobility Fire Safety Standards Act of 2025. We support this legislation as a consumer group deeply committed to protecting consumers from unsafe products, while supporting sustainable transportation alternatives.

Electric bicycles and other micromobility devices are an important sustainable alternative to personal vehicle use by reducing emissions, easing traffic congestion, and offering affordable transportation options. However, as these devices have become more ubiquitous in our communities, we have seen a concerning parallel trend, a dramatic increase in lithium-ion battery fires that have result in deaths, serious injuries and significant property damage.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission noted that, over a five-year period from 2019 through 2023, there were at least 227 unique incidents—involving fires, explosions, gas releases, burns, overheating, and smoke inhalation—associated with lithium-ion batteries used in micromobility products and electrical systems of micromobility products containing such batteries.¹ Out of the 227 incidents, fire incidents accounted for 195 incidents (86 percent), 39 fatalities (100 percent),

¹ U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Proposed Rule to Establish a Safety Standard for Lithium-Ion Batteries Used in Micromobility Products and Electrical Systems of Micromobility Products Containing Such Batteries (Mar. 26, 2025).



174 of the 181 injuries (96 percent), and 112 of the 137 non-injury incidents (82 percent). Out of the 227 total incidents, 120 incidents (53 percent) occurred while the product was plugged in charging, including 18 fatalities (46 percent), 102 injuries (56 percent), and 73 non-injury incidents (53 percent). User removing/replacing battery packs or using an aftermarket battery/charger accounted for 25 incidents, two deaths, and 12 people injured. Three incidents associated with the product contacting water were reported, including one death and no non-fatal injuries. Four incidents associated with homemade battery packs were reported with three fatalities and two injuries while victims were manufacturing, repairing, or charging batteries.

The experience in New York City provides both a warning and a roadmap. In 2023, the city had 18 fatalities due to lithium-ion batteries.² Investigations consistently revealed that these fires were primarily caused by batteries and components that did not meet safety standards, and were often counterfeit, substandard, or incompatible with charging equipment and battery packs.³ The New York City Council passed legislation to require UL or similar certification; more specifically, to be legally sold, rented, or leased in New York City, e-bikes need to meet UL 2849 or similar certification; batteries must meet UL 2271.⁴ After New York City implemented these comprehensive protective standards and other safety measures, incidents declined significantly.⁵

In the District, DC Fire and EMS have documented at least eight lithium-ion battery fire incidents in 2023 alone. The District now must act proactively before it experiences the scale of tragedy seen in New York City. This legislation would require electric bicycle, electric mobility device, and traction batteries manufactured, distributed, sold, or offered for lease or rent in the District meet recognized safety standards, specifically UL 2849 for e-bikes, UL 2272 for personal e-mobility devices, and UL 2271 for batteries. These are not arbitrary standards, but comprehensive safety standards. Further, major manufacturers already meet these standards, so this legislation is a targeted approach to address substandard and dangerous products that undercut responsible businesses while putting people at risk. We would never accept unregulated electric appliances in our home, and we should not accept unregulated high-powered batteries in devices that share our living spaces and streets.

² Fire Dep't of the City of N.Y., FDNY Commissioner Robert S. Tucker Announces Significant Progress in the Battle Against Lithium-Ion Battery Fires (Jan. 8, 2025), <https://www.nyc.gov/site/fdny/news/03-25/fdny-commissioner-robert-s-tucker-significant-progress-the-battle-against-lithium-ion#/0>.

³ UL Standards & Engagement, The Impact of E-Mobility Battery Fires in NYC: The Economic, Human, and Community Toll, <https://cdn.bfldr.com/D35SAQ1Q/as/nn87bk75tw6ncgpkcj7bm/Economic-Impact-Report-NYC-Final>; The Hidden Dangers of Counterfeit Lithium-Ion Batteries: How to Protect from Fake Li-Ion, DanEnergy, <https://www.danenergy.com/blog-posts/hidden-dangers-of-counterfeit-lithium-ion-batteries-how-to-protect-from-fake-li-ion>.

⁴ NY Governor Signs into Law Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Legislation, Bicycle Retailer (July 12, 2024), <https://www.bicycleretailer.com/industry-news/2024/07/12/ny-governor-signs-law-lithium-ion-battery-safety-legislation>.

⁵ *Supra* note 2.



Bill 26-0244 is exactly the kind of proactive, evidence-based policymaking that protects residents and visitors without stifling innovation or access to sustainable transportation. We urge the Council to pass Bill 26-0244 without delay. Every day is another change for a dangerous, non-compliant devices to enter our community.

Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to the safety of all District residents and visitors.

Sincerely,

Courtney Griffin
Director of Consumer Product Safety
Consumer Federation of America
cgriffin@consumerfed.org