\*\*\*States Theory

State vs federal has always been and continues to be a crucial issue in American politics. *No domestic issue* is untouched by this question.

Bodenhamer 2001

(David J. , exec director of Polis Institute at Indiana University-Purdue University http://www.ait.org.tw/infousa/zhtw/DOCS/Demopaper/dmpaper4.html

How has federalism worked in the United States? There is no simple answer to this question. Federalism in fact has been a dynamic framework for government, a characteristic that fits well the changing nature of American society itself. Over its 200-year history, the division of power under American federalism has shifted numerous times in law and practice. The U.S. Constitution is a flexible document, meant to allow the nation to respond to changing circumstances. At times, amendments to the Constitution have given a different role to the central and state governments than originally intended; at other times, courts have provided different interpretations of these roles. The proper balance between national and state powers is **continually** at issue in American politics. It cannot be settled, President Woodrow Wilson (1913-20) observed, "by the opinion of any one generation." Social and economic changes, shifts in political values, the role of the nation in the world -- all these things, he continued, have required **each generation** to treat federalism as "a new question."

Even a casual reading of the Constitution leaves the impression that the central government has responsibility for only a small number of the functions that affect the conduct of everyday affairs. Certainly, this was true for the first century of nationhood. States took almost all of the governmental decisions that affected the lives of their citizens. They defined all crimes and punishments, established the laws of contract, regulated public health and safety, and set the legal standards for education, welfare, and morality.

Despite the importance of the states in daily life, the most pressing public policy questions prior to the American Civil War (1861-65) involved debates over the scope of national power, with most people believing it should remain limited. But a number of pressures kept pushing federalism to the center of political debates. The legacy of the Revolution, with its fears of centralized power, was a strong influence, as was the ambiguity that remained from the constitutional convention and the ratification debates. The language of the Constitution was general, and did not explicitly address whether or not states retained any residual sovereignty in the powers assigned to the national government. Complicating the problem was the fact that states, as a practical matter, were far more competent in performing governmental functions satisfactorily than they would be in later eras when problems increasingly required multi-state solutions.

The Civil War, fought over the question of slavery, settled the dispute about the nature of the union and the supremacy of the national government in it. It did not answer all the questions about the proper division of responsibility between central and state governments, even though the 14th Amendment, ratified in 1868, contained language that permitted the legitimate expansion of national power. But the context for the debate had changed. During the last half of the 19th century, the United States became a manufacturing colossus, a development accompanied by a corresponding rise of a vast domestic market, large cities, great concentrations of wealth, and serious social problems. The rise of corporate monopolies of goods and services in the late 19th and early 20th century raised the specter of uncontrolled economic power, which to most Americans was as threatening as uncontrolled governmental power.

No state or combination of states could effectively set the conditions both to spur and control this growth of commerce and its consequences. So the central government, now increasingly called the federal government, began to assume this responsibility, at first under the "interstate commerce" clause. Among the powers given to Congress in the Constitution is the power "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States...." By 1887, national legislation emerged to regulate monopolies under the interstate commerce power. Within two decades, Congress had passed a host of laws governing everything from national lotteries to the liquor trade to the food and drug industry.

Although the intent of much of this legislation was to prevent states from interfering with the growth of industry, the result was an extension of national power into an arena, the protection of health and welfare in an era of rapid industrialization, previously viewed as a state responsibility. Progressives at the turn of the century, led by President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-09), were unapologetic about this intrusion, arguing that the states need federal help to fulfill state goals. Although the Supreme Court, which by now was recognized as the final arbiter of constitutional interpretation, accepted and promoted this aim, it still attempted to keep federal power in check. Nonetheless, the general trend was clear: Federal authority grew in concert with national needs, and state power diminished correspondingly.

In the 1930s, President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal economic programs further challenged this somewhat conservative balancing of state and federal interests by claiming a broad national authority to respond to the economic crisis of the Great Depression. Congressional measures paved the way for national management of welfare (creation of the Social Security system), agriculture, minimum wages, and labor relations, with other laws establishing federal regulation of such vital areas as transportation, communications, and banking and finance. Taken together with the relief programs and a variety of social experiments, the New Deal created a national administrative state that the emergencies of World War II and the Cold War only strengthened. It was a constitutional revolution of the first order: The U.S. government now exercised powers -- over labor law or banking regulation, for example -- that previously the states had exercised almost exclusively.

The role of the central government within the federal system continued to expand during the last half of the 20th century. The Supreme Court reversed the prevailing interpretation of the 14th Amendment that narrowly defined the scope of national power, and extended federal oversight in areas of crime and punishment, social welfare, race relations, and equal protection of the laws. By the end of the century scarcely an area existed that national power did not reach. The effect was perhaps most apparent in the words most people chose when asked to identify their citizenship. Throughout most of the nation's history, a significant number of citizens identified their primary allegiance with a state; by the end of the 20th century, national citizenship was prized more often.

The revolution in federalism did not end debates about the proper distribution of power between the states and the national government. Disagreements about the proper role of national and state governments within the federal system continue to be an **important part of** American politics. **Virtually no** domestic issue **is untouched by conflict over what level of government has authority to shape or implement policies relating to** it. No longer is it easy to distinguish between the functions of state and national governments, because the current federal system tends to blend responsibilities and blur distinctions in response to complex social and economic issues.

Supreme Court proves this is a relevant question – it hears and decides issues based on federalism

Soronen ‘12

http://knowledgecenter.csg.org/drupal/content/supreme-court-hears-number-significant-federalism-cases

In its October Term 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court will decide four significant and prominent federalism cases involving states. These cases include the Affordable Care Act cases, the Arizona immigration case, the Texas redistricting case and the California Medicaid case. The State and Local Legal Center (SLLC) filed amicus curiae briefs in four cases to be decided this term affecting state and local government, including the California Medicaid case.

\*\*\*States Solvency

States can uniformly fund, staff, signal and implement alternative automobility programs such as walking and bicycling

Darren Flusche, Bike League Policy Director, B.A.history from Syracuse University and a Masters of Public Administration with a concentration in public policy analysis from New York University, July 26th 2012, http://blog.bikeleague.org/blog/2012/07/will-your-state-fully-fund-bicycling-and-walking/, “Will Your State Fully Fund Bicycling and Walking?”; AB

**Twenty years** of experience **has shown that bicycling and walking projects generally do better at lower levels of government**. Cities and regions often value investments in bicycling and walking projects more clearly than states do. That’s why bicyclists strongly supported the bi-partisan Cardin-Cochran amendment to the Senate transportation bill. The amendment increased local control over a small portion of transportation spending – slightly less than half the TA funds – by requiring regional planning agencies, called Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), to directly allocate funds to local projects, without being overruled by the state DOT. Although some of the details have changed, the basic principle has been retained in the final version of the law, known as MAP-21.

Local demand for bicycling and walking projects is overwhelming. Now we have a measure of local control to direct these funds, known in MAP-21 as Transportation Alternatives (TA). Half the TA funds will be distributed to MPOs and rural areas. The state allocates the other half – as long as they do not transfer it to other programs.

If this program works well over the next two years, it will send a powerful signal to Congress that we need to expanding biking and walking programs. If agencies drag their feet – it won’t look good.

To make sure we don’t go back on twenty years of progress, we need every state to immediately fully fund, staff, and implement the new Transportation Alternatives program and make full use of all of MAP-21’s programs.

The American Bikes Coalition has put together the following message for state DOTs:

**We expect every state to fully fund, staff, and implement the new Transportation Alternatives program**. Specifically, states should:

Fully fund: Do not transfer any funds away from Transportation Alternatives or opt-out of the Recreational Trails program

Fully staff: Preserve or increase staff support for Transportation Alternatives by maintaining state Safe Routes to School coordinators and bike/ped coordinators

Fully implement: Promptly award Transportation Alternatives grants with participation of relevant stakeholders

Fully maximize the state’s investments in safe, accessible streets: utilize all MAP-21 funding programs — including HSIP, CMAQ, and STP — to include biking and walking in all transportation projects

Fully spend remaining funds from the Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails programs

We need these programs to get started right away and work well. If that is successful, it will be promising for the future. If not, it will be an uphill ride. **Every single state matters in this**. This is a great opportunity for state and local advocates to make sure resources are directed to their communities. We will be providing resources to help with this in the coming weeks.

**Counterplan would be funded through bonds**

**LAO 07** Legislative Analyst's Office, California's Nonpartisan Fiscal and Policy Advise "Frequently Asked Questions About Bond Financing" http://www.lao.ca.gov/2007/bond\_financing/bond\_financing\_020507.aspx

Bond financing is a type of long-term borrowing that state and local governments frequently use to raise money, primarily for long-lived infrastructure assets. They obtain this money by selling bonds to investors. In exchange, they promise to repay this money, with interest, according to specified schedules. The interest the state has to pay investors on the bonds it issues for public infrastructure is exempt from their federal and state income taxes, which makes the state’s interest cost on the bonds less than it otherwise would be. Why Are Bonds Used? As noted above, the state often uses bonds to finance its major capital outlay projects such as educational facilities, prisons, parks, water projects, and office buildings. This is done mainly because these facilities provide services over many years, their large dollar costs can be difficult to pay for all at once, and different generations of taxpayers benefit from the facilities. The latter fact offers a rationale for spreading the costs of infrastructure over time, as bond repayments allow you to do. In contrast, funds to operate facilities or deliver services to the public are paid out of current revenues.

#### CP requires federal action. Your author concedes any state action on tribe lands needs to happen through a federal agency first

McLawhorn 4 (Nina, Research Administrator, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, State DOTs and Native American Nations, Transportation Synthesis Reports, January 27, <http://wisdotresearch.wi.gov/wp-content/uploads/tsrnativeamerican1.pdf>, KP

State governments have a unique relationship with the Native American nations within their borders. The federal government has recognized Native American tribes as sovereign nations, and as such, intergovernmental relationships with them must be initiated by a federal agency such as FHWA. However, state DOTs have many reasons to work directly with tribal governments. In January 2001, new regulations mandated by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act took effect, requiring consultation with Native American tribes by any agency planning federally funded improvements that could affect properties with cultural or religious significance to those tribes. State DOTs may also work with Native American governments in areas such as public transit, traffic safety, and construction and improvements to reservation roads and bridges. In addition to participating in federal programs such as the Indian Reservation Roads Program, tribal governments are eligible for other state and federal funding programs just as counties and cities are. We were asked to review state DOT organizational approaches for communicating with Native American nations and provide information on both centralized approaches—for example, coordination of contacts through a single DOT office—as well as decentralized approaches that rely on division-by-division communications. Summary For a state DOT, deciding whether to centralize Native American contact, and especially whether to assign dedicated staff for that purpose, is not simply a matter of best practices—each DOT must establish a system that is appropriate for the size, distribution and needs of its Native American population and tribal lands. Native American presence varies widely from state to state; at the high end, California has 109 federally recognized tribes and a total Native American population of over 300,000, and Alaska’s population is 19% Alaska Natives. Indian reservations make up 28% of Arizona’s land base; by contrast, 16 states have no Indian reservations within their borders. With 11 tribes and a total population of over 47,000, Wisconsin falls somewhere in the middle. The map on page 7 of this Census report shows the Native American population distribution by county for the nation: http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/c2kbr01-15.pdf. Wisconsin is one of four Midwest states with a county (Menominee) where Native Americans make up the majority of the population; however, Native Americans make up only 0.9% of Wisconsin’s total population (see page 5 of the Census report).

Interaction between tribal and state governments undermines the trust relationship – specifically in the context of transportation.

AIPC 05, American Indian Policy Center, 11-1-2005, “Yesterday’s Promise – Today’s Challenge,” http://www.americanindianpolicycenter.org/research/st98promise.html (ED)

In addition, there is increased interaction between tribes and state governments that has a similar "chipping away" effect on the trust relationship between tribes and the U.S. Congress. This increased interaction follows years of disinterest on the part of state and local governments about the tribal people living on reservations; a disinterest that extended to American Indians living in urban areas as well. An example of the intensified relationships between tribal governments and state and local governments is the recent emphasis on taxing tribal governments for roads leading to and within Indian reservations or for funding other recreational activities, such as sports stadiums. The federal government is reducing or attempting to eliminate its trust relationship with American Indian tribes through the devolution of social and economic support guaranteed to tribes. For example, the most recent welfare reform policies will cause tribes to deal with the state governments to access and acquire welfare benefits and other forms of social services for tribal members that were once funded under authority of the federal government. This pressure to forge relationships between tribes and state governments has the potential to critically alter the historical, legal, and sovereign relationship between tribes and the federal government both presently and in the future.

\*\*\*Bikes bad

**Bike lanes cause gentrification.**

Davis 11, Paul M. Davis, 8-30-11, Shareable, “Are Bike Lanes Expressways to Gentrification?”, http://www.shareable.net/blog/are-bike-lanes-an-expressway-to-gentrification (ED)

Improvements such as bike lanes increase the perceived “livability” of a neighborhood, serving as a sign to developers and housing speculators that a neighborhood is open for business. In this way, bike lanes play at least an indirect role in making neighborhoods too expensive for low income residents. In addition to discussing these issues, there must be serious consideration of alternative housing models that reduce the displacement of low-income communities. Commons-based housing models such as limited equity cooperative housing and community land trusts could serve as a corrective to real estate speculation and help preserve the character, culture and diversity of these communities. Gentrification is a significant problem in our nation’s cities, one that relatively affluent white people are complicit in, no matter their intentions. This is an ongoing conversation that we must make space for, and **not mistake bike-centric urban development to be a universally-beneficial effort lacking racial or class components.** Bernie Foster, publisher of Portland’s African American newspaper The Skanner, urged his readers to get involved in the discussion, writing “often the squeaky wheels are the ones that get the grease.” It’s a sentiment that will sound familiar to cycling advocates, who have struggled for decades to be included in infrastructure decisions. In this case, they’re the ones who must listen.

**Bike lanes contribute to the displacement of low-income communities.**

Davis 11, Paul M. Davis, 8-30-11, Shareable, “Are Bike Lanes Expressways to Gentrification?”, http://www.shareable.net/blog/are-bike-lanes-an-expressway-to-gentrification (ED)

This is only the latest salvo in a debate taking place in many of the nation’s cities over bike lanes and how they affect disadvantaged communities. In Washington DC, where a 31% increase in white residents in the past decade has been met by an 11% decline in the black population, debates over gentrification have reached a fever pitch. As a recent New York Times article notes, in some DC neighborhoods bike lanes are seen to indicate the impending displacement of low-income communities: **Some of these poorer residents saw revitalization as code for efforts to drive them out, and the building of dog parks and bike and streetcar lanes as efforts by affluent whites to re-arrange spending priorities to suit themselves**. This echoes sentiments voiced in a 2009 Portland Mercury article: "When initiatives for cycling come through, there are questions about who will benefit from bike lanes," says Paige Coleman, director of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods. Coleman says conversations about biking being a "white thing" have come up often in recent years. "Some communities call the bike lanes the **'white stripes of gentrification**,'" she adds. As a white male who uses a bike as my primary mode of transportation, my initial reaction to these reports was one of reflexive defensiveness. After all, the health and environmental benefits of cycling are well-documented and universally beneficial. But it’s worth reconsidering our assumptions. The pet causes of affluent whites have long received more attention than immediate issues affecting those in disadvantaged communities. And while making bicyclists safer on the road might seem to benefit everyone, such city infrastructure initiatives have complex political, race and class components.

Their concerns with safety are based on racial bias – white bicyclists who want safe streets are listened to but black communities aren’t.

Maus 11, Jonathan Maus, 7-21-2011, BikePortland.org, “Meeting on Williams Project turns into discussion of race, gentrification,” http://bikeportland.org/2011/07/21/racism-rears-its-head-on-williams-project-56633

Another theme that emerged last night was a feeling among some people that the only reason safety is a major concern from the City now is because white people are the ones who are in danger. Sharon Maxwell-Hendricks put it this way: "You say you want it 'safe' for everybody, how come it wasn't safe 10 years ago? That's part of the whole racism thing... we wanted safe streets back then; but now that the bicyclists want to have safe streets than it's all about the bicyclists getting safe streets." Donna Maxey told the story about her best friend in first Grade who was killed on Williams because of a lack of safety: "What is causing the anger and resentment is that it's only an issue of safety now that whites are the ones who are riding bicycles and walking on the streets. Because we have been in this community for years and it has not been an issue and now it's an issue. So that's the resentment you're hearing... years of people being told, you don't count, you don't matter... but now that there's a group of people who's coming in that look like the people who are the power brokers — now it's important. That's the anger. That's the hurt."

Cities will implement bike lanes within a racist framework – empirically proven in Portland.

Goodyear 11, Sarah Goodyear, 9-20-2011, *The Atlantic* Cities, “Bike Lane Backlash, Even in Portland,” http://www.theatlanticcities.com/neighborhoods/2011/09/portland-bike-lanes-open-racial-wounds/138/

The Portland Bureau of Transportation wants to install a protected bikeway on North Williams Avenue, which sees as many as 3,000 cyclists daily, and in July a public meeting on the plan – part of a larger “traffic operations safety project” – turned into a contentious forum on the history of institutionalized racism in Portland. Sharon Maxwell-Hendricks, a black business owner who grew up in the neighborhood, has been one of the most vocal opponents to the city’s plan for a wider, protected bike lane. She can't help but feel that the city seems only to care about traffic safety now that white people are living in the area. “We as human beings deserved to have the same right to safer streets years ago,” she says. “Why wasn’t there any concern about people living here then?” The city didn’t get enough input from the African American members of the community, Maxwell-Hendricks argues, as they developed their plan. “They seem to be pushing their own agenda,” she says. “There was the feeling that the city just rolled through with this.”

Building bike paths fails, there has to be a change in mindset

Rosenthal 11

Elisabeth Rosenthal, writer for the NYT and the international Herald Tribune, 7/14/2011, “On biking, why can’t the US learn lessons from Europe,” http://e360.yale.edu/feature/on\_biking\_why\_cant\_the\_us\_learn\_lessons\_from\_europe/2425/

Building bike paths alone will not get people out of their cars in the U.S. and onto bicycles. To create a thriving bike culture in America’s cities, people must begin to view bicycling as Europeans do — not just as a way of exercising, but as a serious form of urban mass transportation.

Bikes are inconvenient, people won’t transition

Rosenthal 11

Elisabeth Rosenthal, writer for the NYT and the international Herald Tribune, 7/14/2011, “On biking, why can’t the US learn lessons from Europe,” http://e360.yale.edu/feature/on\_biking\_why\_cant\_the\_us\_learn\_lessons\_from\_europe/2425/

But my apartment building sequesters bikes on high wall hooks in a basement storage room. That may be fine for a weekend ride in Central Park, but not readily accessible for daily use in work dress. On the bike path, many riders travel hunched over handlebars at death defying speeds. Could I ride here to the office — upright, slowly, and sweat-less? And then where would I park my “vehicle” once I got to work? There is nowhere convenient. So instead I take the subway.

\*\*\*Cap Link

Focus on bicycling feeds into individualist lifestyle politics that directly trades off with active and productive resistance to capitalism.

Allen 10, Emma Allen, December 2010, Freedom Socialist Party, “Lifestyle politics, good intentions, and the road to hell,” http://www.socialism.com/drupal-6.8/?q=node/1540

Portland, Ore., where I live and work, is known for lifestyle niches such as veganism, raw foodism, friendly bike and pedestrian culture, pirate festivals, and zoo bombers. It’s one of many versions of what they call lifestyle politics. You might say it’s an ideology of living day-to-day in harmony with the earth and humanity. This ideal entails composting, bicycling, growing and canning your own vegetables, sowing your own clothes, buying only products from recycled materials, and like that. Nothing is really wrong with any of these things. But turning them into a philosophy of life is not progressive. They don’t make a dent in halting the human exploitation and environmental devastation that defines life under the profit system. They feed the illusion that harmony without justice is possible. And they foster rugged individualist behavior that suits capitalism just fine. A great deal of energy goes into individual organic gardening and other alternative lifestyles. It bleeds away the energy it takes to organize against police brutality, improve working conditions, defend civil rights, and build for revolutionary changes. The more that people simply try to modify their styles of life and monitor their carbon footprint, the more time Wall Street has to grow its gold bars — as icecaps melt away, imperialist wars escalate, and the majority of human beings become poorer.

¡\*\*\*Econ Stuff

Only the uneducated think economists are wrong – studies prove

Auld, 2011

http://chrisauld.com/2011/08/27/who-thinks-economists-know-what-theyre-doing-some-econometric-evidence/

The big story is education: people with little education are much more likely to report that economists don’t know anything at all, and much less likely to report that economists understand things very well, than people with better education. The unconditional probabilities of people who report economists know “nothing at all” are displayed below:

and the regression estimates on educational categories (omitted: dropouts) are as follows:

**Probability economists understand “Not at all,” relative to dropouts**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | (1) | (2) | (3) |
|  | All | 2006 | 2010 |
|  |
| hsgrad | -0.0556 | -0.0809\* | -0.0033 |
|  | (-1.46) | (-1.72) | (-0.05) |
|   |
| college | -0.1687\*\*\* | -0.1815\*\*\* | -0.1486\*\* |
|  | (-4.33) | (-3.74) | (-2.18) |
|   |
| gradschool | -0.1314\*\*\* | -0.1176\*\* | -0.1608\*\* |
|  | (-2.98) | (-2.10) | (-2.26) |
|  |
| N | 1.3e+03 | 863.0000 | 424.0000 |
| r2 | 0.0513 | 0.0416 | 0.0832 |
|  |
| t statistics in parentheses, see text for list of other covariates.\* p < 0.10, \*\* p < 0.05, \*\*\* p < 0.01 |

Just because we might be wrong doesn’t mean you don’t make your best guess– the economic crisis was a foreseeable event.

Kingston ‘12

http://www.evancarmichael.com/Starting-A-Business/3228/Does-Anyone-Know-Anything.html

We have no right to feel superior. Just as the underwriters were unable to predict those changes of temperature, we are unable to predict what unexpected events, perhaps imperceptible in themselves, will have a major impact on our chances of coming out of [recession](http://www.evancarmichael.com/Starting-A-Business/3228/Growing-Under-Pressure.html) this year or next.  A Congressman might quarrel with his wife over breakfast and take out his frustration at a Committee that ends up passing a bad economic package as a result.  “For want of a nail, a shoe was lost; for want of the shoe, the horse was lost; for want of the horse, the message was lost; for want of the message, the battle was lost...”  There are an infinite number of such potential variables. We can never see them all.  However, every [entrepreneur](http://www.evancarmichael.com/Starting-A-Business/3228/Growing-Under-Pressure.html) still needs to make decisions – whether to expand or contract, to buy or to sell, and to save or to invest – that depend on making some sort of educated guess about what is going to happen over the next year or so.  If the last year has taught us anything, it has taught us the need for a degree of humility in making predictions – but it has also taught us that there is no excuse for ignoring the data that is available. Many things are unforeseeable – that this crisis was coming was not one of them.

Downgrade links

Bike lanes are costly – environmental impacts increase costs and delay the plan. They link to our DA and Don’t solve the aff for years.

Dearen ‘12

(February 16, http://www.smartplanet.com/blog/pure-genius/are-bicycle-lanes-really-green-some-city-residents-see-red/7456

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa pedaled his bicycle in a bike-only lane in Venice Beach when a taxicab swerved suddenly and stopped in front of him. The mayor clutched his brakes but it was too late. He fell and broke his elbow.

When the mayor’s accident made headlines in July 2010, the incident energized the city’s cyclists and bike commuters around Los Angeles’ ambitious plans to make 1,600 miles of bike lanes in this auto-centric metropolis. Yet little progress has been made in the year and a half since the mayor’s fall because of an unlikely hurdle: California’s environmental laws.

Much of the blame — or kudos, depending on where your politics lie — for the delays can be placed on Rob Anderson, a 69-year-old with a salt-and-pepper beard who lives 400 miles north in San Francisco. To the fixed-geared hipsters and bicycle utopians he’s a pariah. The city’s cycling boosters have called him a “magnificent jerk” for standing in the way of safer streets for cyclists, a “scumbag” and a “cynical dickhead” in comments on his blog.

Anderson has heard it all since 2006, when he successfully sued San Francisco over its bike plans, arguing the city had not done a proper environmental study as required by state law. While the city had spent years preparing to line its streets with bike lanes, a judge agreed with Anderson and forced San Francisco to stop implementing its bike plan for more than three years in order to finish the costly review.

“The city insists on screwing up our streets on behalf of the Bicycle Coalition and a small, obnoxious minority of bike people. It’s political correctness run amok,” said Anderson, sitting in a café in the Western Addition neighborhood, where he lives and writes his muckraking blog “District 5 Diary.”

Bike advocates called the ruling a “perversion” of state environmental laws and blamed Anderson for blocking an “obviously pro-environment action.”

While Anderson’s fight over bike lanes began as a neighborhood issue, the impact of his lawsuit is having a ripple effect in other places. The most dramatic example is in Villaraigosa’s Los Angeles where, fearing similar lawsuits, the city put the brakes on its biggest bike lane projects to conduct the costly environmental review Anderson’s suit forced San Francisco to do.

The irony is not lost on city leaders or bicyclists, whose collaborations to improve bike lanes in one of the world’s largest, most polluted metropolitan areas are being stymied because of California’s Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA. In essence, the law requires a thorough study of any project that will effect traffic on any street. And while the jury’s out about whether bike lanes have any long-lasting negative impacts on auto traffic, or air pollution for that matter, most experts think increasing cycling cleans the air and reduces traffic. But the law is clear.