



Brain Injury
Association
of Michigan

"Creating a Better Future"

7305 Grand River, Suite 100
Brighton MI 48114

(800) 444-6443
www.biami.org



Motorcycle Helmet Repeal

Issue

For over 35 years and again this year the State of Michigan legislature has bills introduced that would repeal Michigan's mandatory motorcycle helmet law. In recent years, the House and Senate have passed bills to repeal this law and the governor has vetoed them.

Background

The motorcycle helmet law was created in response to federal transportation requirements based on research demonstrating lives would be saved when motorcyclists wore helmets. During the intervening years, extensive research has further validated the necessity of this law, including research in states where such laws were repealed. Two states reinstated a mandatory helmet law after seeing the dramatic increase in deaths and hospitalization of non-helmeted motorcycle riders.

Polling has continuously shown during this past 10 years that 70% and more of Michigan voters do not want this law changed. Yet, legislators have responded to a national motorcycle fringe group, ABATE's appeal to eliminate this law.

Personal freedom is often cited as the reason for appeal; however, the fact rarely considered is that all taxpayers are affected by motorcyclists who choose not to wear a helmet. When a motorcyclist is involved in a crash, police, EMS, trauma hospitals are all involved. Additionally, if the motorcyclist lives, they and their family are often forced into financial ruin and become Medicaid dependent – especially if the injured motorcyclist ends up living in a nursing home.

Our Position

We call upon all Senators to vote NO on the repeal of the motorcycle helmet law (H.B. 4747). Should this law pass the Senate and is vetoed by the Governor, we strongly recommend that all Representatives and Senators to not override the Governor's veto. Michigan can ill afford any additional expenditures or loss of working residents; and certainly does not need to further validate research that shows the number of deaths and serious injury increases when there is not a mandatory motorcycle helmet law.

When a helmet law is in effect, nearly 100% of motorcyclists wear helmets

Michigan based research PROVES helmets saves lives and reduces injuries

NHTSA estimates motorcycle helmet use saved \$1.3 billion in 2002 alone. \$853 million more would have been saved if all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes had worn helmets

States where only minors are required to wear helmets less than 40% of the fatally-injured minors wear helmets.