
By: **Delegates Owings, O'Donnell, Faulkner, Bissett, and Exum**
Introduced and read first time: February 13, 1998
Assigned to: Commerce and Government Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws - Motorcycle Helmets - Minors**

3 FOR the purpose of applying to minors only a certain provision of law that prohibits
4 operating or riding on a motorcycle unless the operator or passenger is wearing
5 certain protective headgear; applying to minors certain evidentiary and
6 procedural standards and certain provisions relating to certain civil actions; and
7 generally relating to the use of protective headgear when operating or riding on
8 a motorcycle.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Article - Transportation
11 Section 21-1306(b) and (e)
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (1992 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
15 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

16 **Article - Transportation**

17 21-1306.

18 (b) [An individual] A MINOR may not operate or ride on a motorcycle unless
19 the [individual] MINOR is wearing protective headgear that meets the standards
20 established by the Administrator.

21 (e) (1) The failure of [an individual] A MINOR to wear protective headgear
22 required under subsection (b) of this section may not:

- 23 (i) Be considered evidence of negligence;
- 24 (ii) Be considered evidence of contributory negligence;
- 25 (iii) Limit liability of a party or an insurer; or

1 (iv) Diminish recovery for damages arising out of the ownership,
2 maintenance, or operation of a motorcycle.

3 (2) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (3) of this subsection, a party,
4 witness, or counsel may not make reference to protective headgear during a trial of a
5 civil action that involves property damage, personal injury, or death if the damage,
6 injury, or death is not related to the design, manufacture, supplying, or repair of
7 protective headgear.

8 (3) (i) Nothing contained in this subsection may be construed to
9 prohibit the right of a [person] MINOR to institute a civil action for damages against
10 a dealer, manufacturer, distributor, factory branch, or other appropriate entity or
11 person arising out of an incident that involves protective headgear alleged to be
12 defectively designed, manufactured, or repaired.

13 (ii) In a civil action described under subparagraph (i) of this
14 paragraph in which 2 or more parties are named as joint tort-feasors, interpleaded as
15 defendants, or impleaded as defendants, and at least 1 of the joint tort-feasors or
16 defendants is not involved in the design, manufacture, supplying, or repair of
17 protective headgear, a court shall order on a motion of any party separate trials to
18 accomplish the ends of justice.

19 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
20 July 1, 1998.