



MARYLAND
HORSE
COUNCIL

P.O. Box 606 | Lisbon, Maryland 21797
www.mdhorsecouncil.org

One Common Bond: The Horse
One Common Voice: The Horse Council

Testimony of the Maryland Horse Council on
HB 713 - Vehicle Laws - Horse Riding - Helmet Requirement for Minors
In the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
March 24, 2022 - FAVORABLE

The Maryland Horse Council (MHC) is a membership-based trade association that represents the state-wide horse industry in Maryland. Our members include horse farms; horse related businesses; equestrian competitors; trainers; individual enthusiasts; equine-assisted therapy programs; and breed, interest, and discipline associations. We represent over 30,000 Marylanders who make their living with horses, or who just own and love them.

MHC supports HB 713, which requires minors to wear approved helmets when riding horses on public land.

There are more horses per square mile in the state of Maryland than in any other state in the nation, including Kentucky, California, and Texas, and 51.8% of Maryland households contain at least one horse enthusiast.

Many horse organizations in Maryland, including Pony Clubs and horse show/ competition associations and venues already support and promote helmet safety and require that minors- and adults as well- wear ASTM/SEI approved helmets at all times while mounted. Many lesson stables do, as well, though some report receiving “pushback” from students and even parents of students, when trying to enforce their rules. Passing a statewide law would provide a legal backbone for lesson stable owner or trainer’s own requirements.

The American Medical Equestrian Association calculates that ASTM/SEI approved helmets have reduced all riding-related head injuries by 30% and severe head injuries by 50%.

We urge a favorable report for this commonsense legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL

(844) MDHORSE (844-634-6773), info@mdhorsecouncil.org