

# **SB 503- Written Testimony Updated Draft.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jay Jackson

Position: FAV



## **Motorcycle Riders Foundation**

P.O. Box 250, Highland, IL 62249

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**Bill:** SB 503 - Vehicle Laws - Protective Headgear Requirement - Exception (In Remembrance of Gary "Pappy" Boward)

**Position:** SUPPORT

**Committee:** Judicial Proceedings Committee

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF), thank you for the opportunity to share are views on the proposed law regarding motorcycle headgear. We support House Bill 639 and applaud the efforts of its cosponsors to address this issue.

The MRF is a national organization focused on providing leadership at a federal level for state motorcyclists' rights organizations, motorcycle clubs, and individual riders. The MRF is concerned with national and international issues that impact freedom and safety of American street motorcyclists, while also supporting the efforts of our state partners. We are committed to being national advocates for advancing motorcycling and its accompanying lifestyle and work in conjunction with a variety of partners to help educate elected officials and policymakers.

Motorcycling is something enjoyed by over 8.6 million Americans and over 113,000 Marylanders. With our network of over 250,000 motorcyclists nationally, and on behalf of our members in Maryland, we support SB 503 because it recognizes that motorcyclists who have experience and appropriate training have a right to choose for themselves whether they want to wear a helmet.

The movment to allows those that ride to decide their own helmet use is gaining steam in the United States. In the last few years both the state of Missouri and the state of Nebraska have moved to helmet choice laws. Maryland is in the minority with its current mandatory helmet law. Seventeen states and the District of Columbia require mandatory hemet usage while the remaining states, in some form, allow choice.

### ***The Principles of Personal Autonomy Support the Passage of SB 503***

In our country, we tout our ability to choose. We can choose where we live, how to educate our children, what we can eat, drink, and even smoke. Wearing a helmet is a similar choice that ought to be made by the individual, not the state. In a NY Court of Appeals case in 1914, Judge Benjamin Cardozo wrote, "every human being of adult years and sound mind has a right to determine what



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shall be done with his own body.” SB 503 mirrors this idea - those that are 21 years or older, who have operated a motorcycle for two years, and taken a motorcycle rider safety course, can determine for themselves whether they want to wear a helmet.

Requiring helmets is a glaring example of paternalism. It’s the state telling motorcyclists that it knows best and substituting its judgment for that of motorcyclists. Regardless of whether wearing a helmet is objectively ‘good’ or ‘bad,’ a motorcyclist should be allowed to decide for themselves whether or not they want to wear one. Safety is essential, but people can choose what safety precautions they wish to follow. SB 503 recognizes that this choice belongs to the individual motorcyclist.

### ***Maryland Should Focus on Education, Rather than on Legal Requirements***

By focusing on education, rather than on a paternalistic legal requirement, SB 503 focuses on learning about the various ways to operate a motorcycle, rather than focusing on punishing those who do not operate it in a way the state sees as satisfactory. In doing so, motorcyclists can learn about their motorcycle while also determining what safety precautions they want to take.

Instead of placing an arbitrary fine that some can pay and then continue to not wear a helmet, Maryland should focus on education that complies with national standards and teaches people how to ride safely. In doing so, individuals will learn to evaluate whether they want to wear a helmet while also learning how to ride safely. These courses could also lead to a reduction in fatalities and accidents.

For these reasons, MRF respectfully requests a favorable vote on SB 503.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jay Jackson at [jay@mrf.org](mailto:jay@mrf.org).

Sincerely,

Jay Jackson

Vice President

Motorcycle Riders Foundation

**2024\_PositionPaper-SB503-HB639.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ken Eaton

Position: FAV

ABATE of Maryland, Inc.



Calvert County Chapter

Position Paper in Favor of SB503 & HB 639

Prepared by Dean Howes with ABATE of Maryland

Pg 1 Opening Statement

Pg 2 Some Cold Hard Realities

Pg 3 Interesting Points of Skewed #s

Pg 5 Fatality Ratios 2021 back to 2016

Pg 11 Fatality Ratios all 50 States 2013

The information here serves only to cover the effectiveness of an all rider helmet law and not the effectiveness of a helmet itself. The actual effectiveness of helmets can only be determined by an accident to death ratio and there is insufficient "accurate" data available to arrive at such a figure.

1) Any data based on miles traveled/vehicle cannot be used for obvious reasons. (Some states reported 0 miles for motorcycles but still reported fatalities for motorcyclists. Over a 9-year period NHTSA reports that the # of registered motorcycles roughly doubled but the total miles traveled for motorcycles stayed nearly the same.)

2) The best way to measure the effectiveness of an all rider helmet law is to compare fatalities to motorcycle registrations ratios between states with all rider laws and "free states", preferably those with similar riding conditions, climate, and length of riding season. Example Montana, a free state is going to have a lower ratio than Georgia, an all rider state for obvious reasons.

3) Much of the opposition's testimony is based on seriously flawed, distorted, cherrypicked, and simply WRONG statistics. The first of these is that 37% of lives could have been saved if all states had an all rider helmet law. This a # they have adopted from NHTSA even though NHTSA's own statistics show this to be false! If the whole "37%" thing is true than why is there not a 37% less fatalities to registrations ratio in states, including Maryland that have all rider helmet laws. See attached ratios that are determined using statistics from NHTSA, FARS, and the Governor's Highway Safety Council. There are now 33 free states and 17 mandatory states with the addition of Missouri and Nebraska as free states. Included here are ratios for all 50 states in 2013 and only states with similar riding seasons for subsequent years. (Note stats on following pages for Missouri are when they were a mandatory state.)

4) Also attached are numerous statistics from the opposition in previous years that are at the very least questionable and a few statistics to put thing in perspective.

5) There are also a number or probable benefits to the fiscal bottom-line by passing SB712. See cold hard realities page.

## Some Cold Hard Realities

It is far cheaper to treat a dead patient.

An organ donor can donate organs that could save up to eight lives and tissue matter that could improve up to 50 lives.

Traffic accidents, especially motorcycle accidents, are a good source of organ donors. That's why many in the medical community sarcastically refer to motorcycles as "donorcycles".

A deceased person will no longer receive Social Security and Medicare even though they have paid in for years.

A deceased person will not require Medicare/Medicaid or long-term geriatric care into their 70s, 80s and 90s. A considerable savings to society.

Medical costs of treating traffic accidents is about 2% of total healthcare costs and motorcycle accidents about 2/10 of a percent.

Speeding fatalities are about 5 times (500%) that of unhelmeted riders. But this is not being addressed.

Pedestrian fatalities surpassed total motorcycle fatalities in 2014, 15, 16 by 1463 or 10% over three years and continue to do so.

Insurance rates are not higher in free states than all rider states. Surely the insurance industry has calculated and understands risk better than anyone.

There are 33 free states that have not gone bankrupt due to their reduced helmet laws.

History shows in states that have repealed their mandatory helmet laws there has been an increase in M/C registrations from 30 to almost 100%. (Which explains a lot of the increase in fatalities.) In Maryland in 2016 there were 123,936 motorcycles in Maryland, so an increased of 30% would result in 37,189 more motorcycles registered in Maryland. Let's say the average cost of a motorcycle is \$14,000 so the tax on that is \$840. Multiply that times 37,189 and you get \$31,231,200 tax revenue collected. This doesn't take into account titling fees and registrations every 2 years for 37,189 more motorcycles.

There would also be a positive impact on business as all must be insured and all require maintenance and repair. Most riders will spend considerable money on parts and accessories. Then there is the impact on tourism when we spend our money while recreational riding. All of this is taxed as well. Ask the mayor of Ocean City how motorcycles effect his budget in September.

## Some interesting points and skewed #,s

In 2013 there were five free states with a combined # of M/C fatalities (55) which is less than the 59 M/C fatalities here in Maryland alone. This a true fact and perfect example of misrepresenting and "cherry picking" #'s and statistics. The five states were Alaska, Maine, N Dakota, Wyoming and Idaho. Obviously, these states have shorter riding seasons than Maryland.

For the "Doom and Gloom" effect, the opposition always uses 1997 stats for comparisons, a year which had the lowest fatality rate. They always point to the increased # not % of fatalities even though in 1997 there were 3.8 million M/C compared to 6.7 million in 2006 and 8.6 million in 2018.

The opposition always point to any increase in states that adopt freedom of choice but fail to mention the increase in M/C registrations when all rider laws are amended. These increases are between 30 & 100%.

Maryland Institute for EMS (Patricia Gainer) said 27.1% of M/C trauma patients were unhelmeted, Shock Trauma Center said 17%, Trauma Net said 8%. Since we know that helmets don't prevent accidents doesn't that mean that somewhere between 8 and 27 motorcyclists per 100 are not wearing a helmet when they ride? That's not what I see when I'm out on Maryland's roads. When was the last time you saw a rider without a helmet in Maryland? Come on guys, at least get together and pick a number.

Advocates for Highway Safety (Jacquelin Gillan) said there were 11 times more unhelmeted fatalities in free states than there were in all rider states. NO KIDDING, there were probably hundreds of times more riders riding without a helmet in free states. You are probably 11 times more likely to drown swimming than standing on the dock. Advocates for Highway Safety said there was 56% decrease in M/C fatalities after the enactment of the all rider helmet law, Partnership for a Safer Maryland said 36%. Once again people pick a #. Advocates



for Highway Safety also said that \$477 million were saved by the helmet law while Partnership for a Safer Maryland said \$118 million? Once again people pick a #.

Partnership for a Safer Maryland (Jaqueline Milani) quotes the CDC "It's unclear what benefit motorcycle education has". I can't believe this was even said. Even NHTSA says that 25% of fatalities were unlicensed/untrained, even though they represent a much smaller % of total riders. I'm sure that Senators Miller and Stone, who helped enact the Maryland motorcycle program, would see this differently.

## FATALITIES TO M/C REGISTRATIONS 2021

	# of Registered M/C	Fatalities	Fatalities per 10K reg M/C
The Free States			
Pennsylvania	385,129*	230	5.97
Delaware	26,729	24	(A) 8.97
Ohio	389,657*	226	5.79
Indiana	234,393	137	(A) 5.84
Illinois	284,754*	176	(A) 6.18
Totals/Average	1,320,662	793	6.00
The Mandatory States			
Maryland	104,783*	80	7.63
Virginia	188,042*	114	6.06
N, Carolina	250,075	233	9.32
W. Virginia	49,563*	29	5.85
Totals/Average	592,463	456	7.70

Even if you take out N. Carolina high rates stats the average for mandatory states would be 6.51 deaths per 10/K M/C registrations compared to 6.00 for free states.

\*=Decease from previous year

A=Sharpe increase from past 10-year average

## FATALITIES TO M/C REGISTRATIONS 2020

	# of Registered M/C	Fatalities	Fatalities per 10K reg M/C
The Free States			
Pennsylvania	400,550	219	5.47
Delaware	26,594*	15	5.64
Ohio	392,928*	211	5.37
Indiana	230,658*	151	6.55
Illinois	303,917*	153	5.03
Totals/Average	1,354,647	749	5.53
The Mandatory States			
Maryland	111,553*	8.5	7.62
Virginia	196,469	101	5.14
N, Carolina	243,437	192	7.89
W. Virginia	52,915	38	7.18
Totals/Average	604,374	416	6.88

Even if you take out N. Carolina high rates stats the average for mandatory states would be 6.21 deaths 10/K M/C registrations compared to 6.00 for free states.

\*=Decease from previous year

## FATALITIES TO M/C REGISTRATIONS 2019

	# of registered M/C	Fatalities	Fatalities/10K reg M/C
The Free States			
Pennsylvania	366,641	176	4.80
Delaware	28,312	18	6.36
Ohio	406,543	162	3.98
Indiana	252,280	127	5.46
Illinois	314,802	138	4.38
Totals/Av	1,368,578	621	4.54 average
The Mandatory States			
Maryland	113,195	75	6.26
Virginia	193,813	102	5.26
N. Carolina	187,849	208	11.07
W. Virginia	46,763	28	5.99
Totals/Av	541,620	413	7.63

Even if you take out North Carolina's reported statistics the average for the mandatory states would be 5.79 deaths per 10K registered M/C compared to the 4.54 for the free states.

FATALITIES TO M/C REGISTRATIONS 2018

	# of registered M/C	Fatalities	Fatalities/10K reg M/C
The Free States			
Pennsylvania	393,509	165	4.19
Delaware	26,035	17	6.52
Ohio	388,108	145	3.74
Indiana	231,183	117	5.06
Illinois	300,247	119	3.96
Totals/Av	1,399,081	563	4.20 average
The Mandatory States			
Maryland	114,460	62	5.42
Virginia	200,422	100	4.99
N. Carolina	236,636	191	8.07
W. Virginia	52,641	39	7.41
Totals/Av	604,159	392	6.49

Even if you take out North Carolina's reported statistics the average for the mandatory states would be 5.47 deaths per 10K registered M/C compared to the 4.20 for the free states.

## FATALITIES TO M/C REGISTRATIONS 2017

	# of registered M/C	fatalities	fatalities/10K reg M/C
The Free States			
Pennsylvania	377158	187	4.9
Delaware	27810	10	3.5
Ohio	410187	157	3.8
Indiana	250579	149	5.9
Illinois	333943	162	4.8
Totals/Av	1,399,677	665	4.8 average
The Mandatory States			
Maryland	118277	86	7.3
Virginia	193951	117	6.0
N. Carolina	188843	176	9.3
W. Virginia	60582	26	4.3
Totals/Av	561653	405	7.2

Even if you take out North Carolina's reported statistics the average for the mandatory states would be 6.1 deaths per 10K registered M/C compared to the 4.8 for the free states. Where is evidence of 37% lives saved?

## FATALITIES TO M/C REGISTRATIONS 2016

	#of registered M/C	fatalities	fatalities/10K reg. M/C
The Free States			
Pennsylvania	393037	191	4.9
Delaware	28158	14	4.9
Ohio	408114	199	5.0
Indiana	223603	101	4.5
Illinois	314807	155	4.9
Totals/Av	1,367,719	660	4.8

The Mandatory States			
Maryland	123936	75	6.1
Virginia	191820	79	4.1
N. Carolina	195618	185	9.5
W. Virginia	61090	29	4.7
Totals/Av	572,464	368	6.4

Fatalities to M/C registrations 2013 all 50 states

	#of registered M/C	Fatalities	fatalities/10K reg M/C
The Free States			
*Illinois	352318	148	4.2
*Iowa	183294	41	2.2
Alaska	32207	2	0.6
Arizona	188360	146	7.8
Colorado	184549	83	4.5
Connecticut	91054	50	5.5
Hawaii	40564	17	4.2
Idaho	64944	24	3.7
Indiana	218630	90	4.1
Kansas	99169	35	3.5
Maine	63114	11	1.7
Minnesota	237259	59	2.5
Montana	171085	32	1.9
New Hampshire	73612	24	3.3
New Mexico	65321	40	6.1
N Dakota	35756	9	2.5
Ohio	402264	130	3.2
Oklahoma	126883	92	7.3
S Dakota	86710	22	2.5
Utah	64970	30	4.6
Wisconsin	323378	81	2.5
Wyoming	31397	9	2.9

Alaska through Wyoming under 18 must wear a helmet

\*No law whatsoever pertaining to helmets in these states.



Fatalities to M/C registrations 2013 50 states cont'd

The Free States cont'd

	# of registered M/C	Fatalities	fatalities/10K reg M/C
*Delaware	30056	20	6.7
Arkansas	74196	56	7.5
Kentucky	109821	78	7.1
Pennsylvania	400908	178	4.4
Rhode Island	32252	11	3.4
S Carolina	113315	120	10.5
Texas	443856	487	11.0
Florida	545452	460	8.4
Michigan	267292	127	4.8
Totals/Av	5,153986	2712	5.26

\*under 19 must wear a helmet

Arkansas through Michigan under 21 must wear a helmet.

Florida and Michigan require additional 10K of insurance.

Fatalities to M/C registrations 2013 All 50 states cont'd

The mandatory all rider states

	# of registered M/C	Fatalities	Fatalities/10K reg M/C
Alabama	118084	80	6.7
California	799900	447	5.6
Georgia	200133	100	5.0
Louisiana	113778	84	7.4
Maryland	99560	59	5.9
Massachusetts	125122	39	3.1
Mississippi	28433	38	13.4
Missouri	184723	71	3.8
Nebraska	56224	14	2.5
Nevada	70675	50	7.1
New Jersey	152111	55	3.6
New York	345118	168	4.9
N Carolina	195493	134	6.9
Oregon	89797	31	3.5
Tennessee	163820	131	8.0
Vermont	28777	5	1.7
Virginia	189689	63	3.3
W Virginia	58021	24	4.1
Washington	227073	73	3.2
D.C.	4170	3	7.2
Totals/Av	3,001,201	1669	5.56

Slightly higher than the average for the "Free" states?

**SB503\_Helmet\_KEaton-Favorable-Rev1.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ken Eaton

Position: FAV



# ABATE OF MARYLAND, INC.

*Dedicated to Freedom of the Road & Responsible Motorcycle Legislation*

To: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chairman and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Ken Eaton, Director, Executive Director, ABATE of Maryland, Inc.

Date: February 21, 2024

Re: **SB503** - Vehicle Laws - Protective Headgear Requirement - Exception (In Remembrance of Gary "Pappy" Boward)

Position: **FAVORABLE: SUPPORT**

I am a BIKER from Queen Anne's County MD – District 36. I have ridden many, many miles of smiles across 30 different states in the past 35 years on street bikes. I attend leadership and legislative seminars, I have been to several “Meeting of the Minds” events where bikers from all over the country, and a few from other countries, gather to discuss motorcycle related issues. I attend Transportation Safety Summits, meet with all types of motorcycle related groups, clubs, and independent riders alike. I am a part of a large group of **motorcycling experts**. We spend a large part of our lives around motorcycles and bikers.

ABATE of Maryland, Inc. represents the approximately 121,000 on road motorcycles that are registered in Maryland. We are a state motorcycle rights organization that brings together the voices of independent riders, clubs, riding organizations, etc. We have chapters throughout the state and our members include a diverse cross-section of motorcycle riders in Maryland. We cover the mountains to the ocean and every place in-between. Our members and friends include men and women of every race. We have junior members that hope to ride the roads alongside us one day. All of our members and board members are VOLUNTEERS. No one gets paid to be a part of our organization. We all dedicate our personal time and money to fighting for motorcyclists' rights.

ABATE of Maryland, Inc. **SUPPORTS SB 503** - Vehicle Laws - Protective Headgear Requirement - Exception (In Remembrance of Gary "Pappy" Boward). A large portion of our membership feels very strongly that the Freedom of Choice regarding the use of motorcycle helmets in Maryland should be restored to us as motorcyclists. Please note that the Fiscal Policy on this bill is listed as minimal. It states that “any impact of Medicaid expenditures and federal fund revenues is assumed to be negligible.”

ABATE is NOT a one trick pony. We have worked in the halls in Annapolis for the past 50 years. We have fought for and against numerous pieces of legislation. If it affects motorcyclists, we are tracking it and working on it. We try to make sure that the state, counties, and municipalities are a part of May is Motorcycle Safety & Awareness Month. We work closely with MDOT-MVA to hold motorcycle safety events and make sure that some of the motorcycle registration funds go back towards motorcycle safety & awareness. We were instrumental in getting the Motorcycle Safety Program started in Maryland. We have worked on bills that include violation of right-of-way, profiling, toll increases, passenger footrests, handlebar heights, license plate size, night-time awareness auxiliary lighting, definition of a motorcycle, motorcycle parking, motorcycle check points, and helmet bills, just to name a few.

Right now, we would like to make Maryland the 34<sup>th</sup> state to provide Freedom of Choice regarding helmets. Currently, there are 33 other states that do not have mandatory helmet laws for motorcyclists. *Please see the attached graphic at the end of this document.*

- 3 states are 100% Freedom of Choice

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- 30 states are Freedom of Choice – Age Restricted
- 17 states & Washington DC have a helmet mandate for ALL riders

The 33 states that allow Freedom of Choice are not on the brink of bankruptcy because motorcyclists are NOT wearing helmets. Actually, we have found that most of the Freedom of Choice states have a lesser rate of fatal accidents per registered motorcycle than mandatory helmet states. See the attached chart itemizing the states nearby and including Maryland, showing the number of motorcycle fatalities compared to the number of motorcycle registrations. We hear a lot from the medical side of the aisle, and I have no doubt that they see the absolute worst of the worst. But that is what they signed up to do. I commend them for choosing that profession and doing what they do. However, as motorcyclists, we seem to get pigeon-holed as being a “social burden.” Surely there are numerous other accidents such as falls at the house, car & truck accidents, sports injuries, etc., that significantly contribute to traumatic injury statistics.

We were successful in getting legislation passed in Maryland that prohibited profiling of motorcyclists. We should start thinking about why we are being profiled as being more of a “social burden” than any other injury classification. Why are pedestrians, bicycle riders, water/snow skiers, boaters, mountain bikers, automobile drivers, commercial truck drivers, etc., not mandated to wear helmets? As motorcyclists, we are MANDATED by law to make an additional purchase of a motorcycle helmet, that is allegedly a required safety device. No other vehicle classification on the roadway requires additional purchases to enjoy driving or riding after the initial purchase.

The other side of this is a helmet only protects approximately 17% of the average body. There are numerous other vital organs and body parts that remain unprotected in the other 83%. Quite often, motorcycle riders receive major chest, spine, legs, arms, and other significant injuries. As motorcycle riders, we take inherent risks to enjoy our way of life. Gloves, boots, jackets, chaps, etc. are all other tools available to us to use as we feel necessary. Personally, I would never go on the road without boots and jeans. Others are perfectly comfortable wearing sneakers and shorts. It is a Freedom of Choice.

Most of us have had friends that have experienced motorcycle accidents. Some have been minor; some have been major. However, there are over 4 million licensed drivers in the State of Maryland, with approximately 100,000 of them being licensed to ride motorcycles. We are talking about 2.5% of the licensed drivers, probably much less as many that are licensed just do not ride or own motorcycles any longer. I had friends that have worn helmets in accidents and died. I also have had friends that were not wearing helmets and made out just fine. I also have had many, many, more friends that have died of other causes such as heart disease, cancer, traumatic brain injuries from falls at home, construction accidents, automobile accidents, COVID, the list goes on. At some point, if you believe in any higher power, you really just have to realize that NONE of us are going to make it out alive. We are ALL going to die someday. No helmet or any other device is going to stop our deaths if it is our time to go. I firmly believe that I have an expiration date, I just do not know what date that is, and I prefer to live my life to the fullest.

Regarding medical costs, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Division (NHTSA), DOT HS 810 581 – Rehabilitation Costs and Long Term Consequences of Motor Vehicle Injury publication, the following is the “Adjusted Federal Prospective Payment for Motorcyclists by Diagnosis Group (in 2002 dollars), specifically relating to Traumatic Brain Injury, which seems to be of great concern to some.

Diagnosis Group	Motorcycle Injury	Other Motor Vehicle	Attempted Suicide	Assault	Other Unintentional
Traumatic Brain Injury	\$ 16,545	\$ 16,441	\$ 17,096	\$ 15,369	\$ 15,169

Even if you adjust these for 2024 dollars, the ratios stay the same. TBI's as a result of a motorcycle injury are less costly than "Attempted Suicide", and pretty close to the "Other Motor Vehicle" category. Even when you look at the Average cost per day (mean total cost / Average length of stay), the TBI costs are lower than the average of \$796 when compared to the other Rehabilitation Impairment Categories (RIC). Bottom line, accidents happen. The cost of caring for an un-helmeted rider vs a helmeted rider does not seem to make a significant difference, especially considering amputation, fractures, and other orthopedics.

Bikers as a group are blue collar, white collar, no collar, and everything in between. We belong to professional organizations, social organizations, and fraternal organizations. We are Elks, Masons, Shriners, Lions, the local PTO, and scout leaders, etc. Many are active or retired military. Many of us belong to other riding organizations. American Legion Riders, VFW Riders, ABATE of nearby states, Winged Riders, or any of the numerous clubs and groups. We are members of other motorcycle organizations such as the American Motorcyclist Association, The Motorcycle Riders Foundation, Bikers Without Borders, Bikers Against Child Abuse, etc. We plan, attend, donate and spend countless hours and dollars supporting events that benefit our communities.

There are many members here in the General Assembly that own and ride motorcycles. As many of you are aware, motorcycling is not an inexpensive lifestyle. Motorcycles range in cost from \$5,000 to \$50,000 or even higher. A very large percentage of us have medical insurance coverage. Actually, in Maryland, most people are required to have health insurance or pay a penalty in taxes. I think the poor dirty biker argument that is a "social burden" has gone away long ago. The Maryland Health Connection was started some time ago, to "protect your health and your wallet."

Also, Maryland is situated between two states that do not have mandatory helmet laws. Riders from Freedom of Choice states will often bypass Maryland, as long as possible. They spend their money elsewhere buying gas, food, drink, hotel rooms, parts, services, accessories, and many other items. I live only about 17 miles from the Delaware line. Often, I choose to ride in Delaware and PA to do my riding where I can have the Freedom to Choose. My hard-earned dollars go to businesses in those states when I am riding there.

The Town of Ocean City Maryland is the host town to a large motorcycle rally every fall. Riders from all over converge upon Ocean City and the surrounding areas for the event. Many riders from Delaware, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, travel through Delaware as long as possible to enjoy the Freedom of Choice. Yes, motorcyclists will go out of their way to avoid a particular state or roadway, just as easily as they will travel long distances to enjoy a rally, a scenic road, or a side trip to a fantastic destination. The bottom line is many are spending their tourism dollars in other states as long as possible before coming to Maryland. Many other riders refuse to come to Maryland because they are not allowed to have the Freedom to Choose. For example, one of the largest rallies in the country is located in South Dakota. Once a rider leaves Maryland, he can head up through Pennsylvania and go all the way to Sturgis SD and enjoy the Freedom to Choose. That is over 1800 miles one way! I have personally done it several times and have thoroughly enjoyed the ride! So far, Idaho is my furthest destination away from home while riding.

Here are a few facts about Freedom of Choice states. Many of these events have attendance in the hundreds of thousands of bikers. Think about those tourism dollars.

Major US Motorcycle Rally locations:

- Daytona Bike Week - **Florida: Freedom to Choose**
- Laconia Bike Week – **New Hampshire: Freedom to Choose**

- Myrtle Beach Bike Week – *South Carolina: Freedom to Choose*
- Republic of Texas Bike Rally - *Texas: Freedom to Choose*
- Hog Rock - *Illinois: Freedom to Choose*
- Sturgis Motorcycle Rally – *South Dakota: Freedom to Choose*
- Bikes, Blues & BBQ - *Arkansas: Freedom to Choose*

One more group of parting thoughts, as provided to us from ABATE of Arkansas:

- Why are motorcyclists the ONLY operators and, or passengers of any motorized form of transportation used on public highways and streets that are required by law to wear a crash helmet?
- Why would auto drivers and passengers NOT be required to wear helmets if in fact “safety and reduction of injuries” is the public concern of the helmet issued mandated to motorcyclists?
- Why aren’t mandatory motorcycle helmet laws considered selective, class discrimination?
- Why are motorcycle accidents victims seen, as a whole, by the medical profession to be “Burdens to Society” whereas the auto accident victims with similar injuries are not?
- Why does the non-motorcycling public perceive us as “bikers only,” when in fact our motorcycles are usually in addition to what the non-motorcycling public has or does, which means we also have jobs, kids, kitchens, and insurance?
- Why is it OK for un-helmeted people to ride around in a convertible auto with the top down while playing bumper cars in traffic and it is NOT OK for an un-helmeted motorcyclist to do the same thing?
- Why does the state mandate safety equipment usage with a penalty for non-compliance, while at the same time refuses to be held liable for injuries one might receive in an accident because of and due to compliance with the law?

We are not asking to make motorcycle helmets illegal in Maryland. We are asking that experienced adult riders be provided the Freedom of Choice regarding helmet usage. I suspect that just like in many other states, there will be a pretty varied range of helmet usage. Some will always wear helmets, some will never wear helmets, and some will wear a helmet when they feel appropriate.

We urge the committee to consider a **Favorable** vote on SB503 and move it to the Senate floor for a vote.

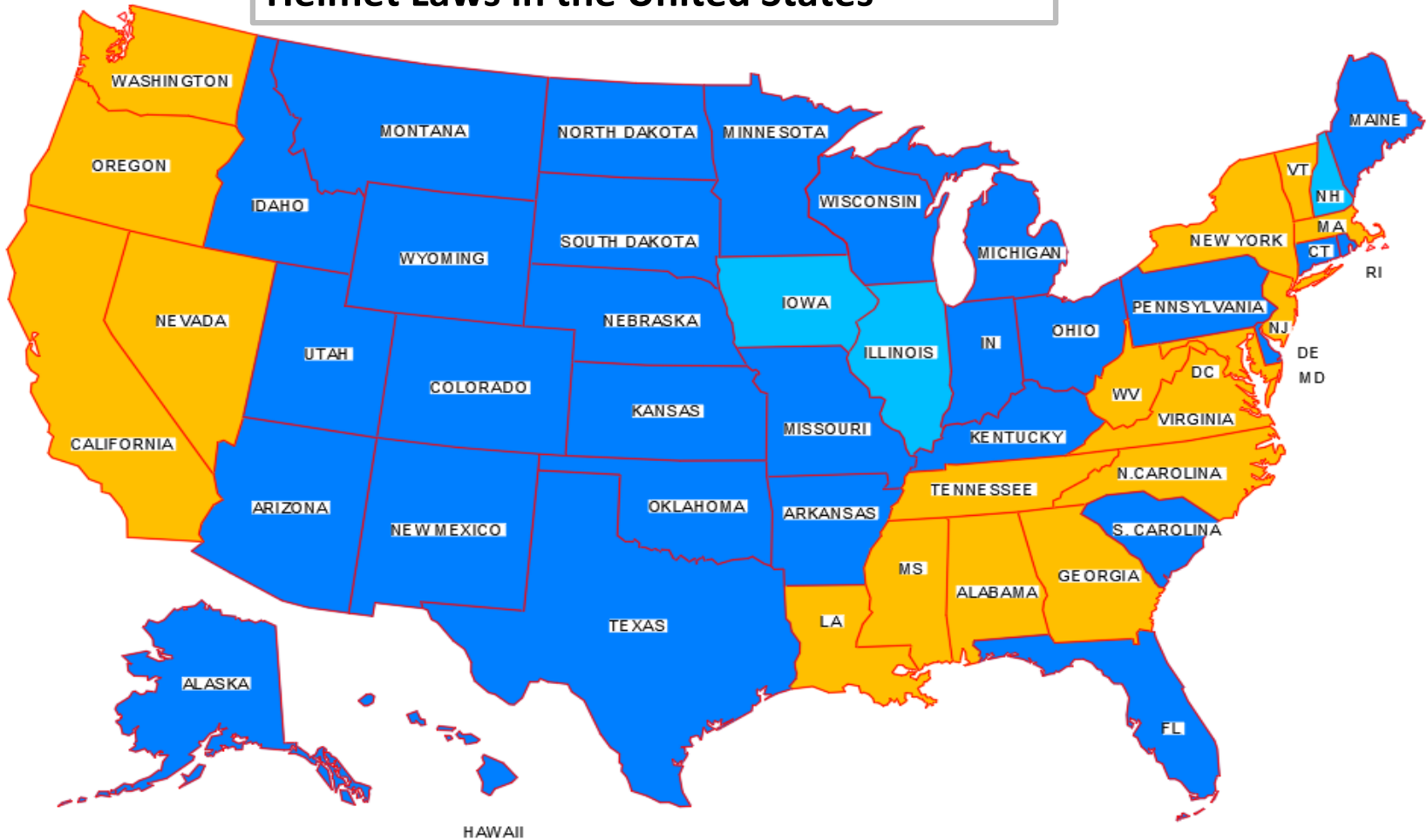
Thank you!



Kenneth B. Eaton, Executive Director  
**ABATE of Maryland, Inc.**  
Tel: 410-263-9185 (office)  
Email: [director@abateofmd.org](mailto:director@abateofmd.org)

# Helmet Laws in the United States

- State
- Alabama
- Alaska
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming



100% Freedom of Choice (3 states)  
 Freedom of Choice - Age Restricted (30 states)  
 Helmet Mandate (17 states & DC)

DEDICATED TO FREEDOM OF THE ROAD



**ABATE of MARYLAND, Inc.**



## NUMBER OF MOTORCYCLE FATALITIES COMPARED TO MOTORCYCLE REGISTRATIONS

		FREEDOM OF CHOICE STATES						HELMET MANDATE STATES				
Description	Year	Pennsylvania	Delaware	Ohio	Indiana	Illinois	6 Years Cummulative	Maryland	Virginia	N Carolina	W Virginia	6 Years Cummulative
# of registered M/C	2021	385,129	26,729	389,657	234,393	284,754	1,320,662	104,783	188,042	250,075	49,563	592,463
Fatalities		230	24	226	137	176	793	80	114	233	29	456
Fatalities per 10K Reg M/C		5.97	8.98	5.80	5.84	6.18	6.00	7.63	6.06	9.32	5.85	7.70
# of registered M/C	2020	400,550	26,594	392,928	230,658	303,917	1,354,647	111,553	196,469	243,437	52,915	604,374
Fatalities		219	15	211	151	153	749	85	101	192	38	416
Fatalities per 10K Reg M/C		5.47	5.64	5.37	6.55	5.03	5.53	7.62	5.14	7.89	7.18	6.88
# of registered M/C	2019	366,641	28,312	406,543	252,280	314,802	1,368,578	113,195	193,813	187,849	46,763	541,620
Fatalities		176	18	162	127	138	621	75	102	208	28	413
Fatalities per 10K Reg M/C		4.80	6.36	3.98	5.03	4.38	4.54	6.63	5.26	11.07	5.99	7.63
# of registered M/C	2018	393,509	26,035	388,108	231,183	300,247	1,339,082	114,460	200,422	236,636	52,641	604,159
Fatalities		165	17	145	117	119	563	62	100	191	39	392
Fatalities per 10K Reg M/C		4.19	6.53	3.74	5.06	3.96	4.20	5.42	4.99	8.07	7.41	6.49
# of registered M/C	2017	377,158	27,810	410,187	250,579	333,943	1,399,677	118,277	193,951	188,843	60,582	561,653
Fatalities		187	10	157	149	162	665	86	117	176	26	405
Fatalities per 10K Reg M/C		4.96	3.60	3.83	5.95	4.85	4.75	7.27	6.03	9.32	4.29	7.21
# of registered M/C	2016	393,037	28,158	408,114	223,603	214,807	1,267,719	114,460	200,422	236,636	52,641	604,159
Fatalities		191	14	199	101	155	660	62	100	191	39	392
Fatalities per 10K Reg M/C		4.86	4.97	4.88	4.52	7.22	5.21	5.42	4.99	8.07	7.41	6.49

<b>5.04</b>	<b>Fatalities per 10,000 Registered Motorcycles</b>	<b>7.07</b>
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\* States selectd based upon similar riding season to Maryland

Data obtained from NHTSA

Information Compiled by ABATE of Maryland, Inc.



# **SB0503\_WrittenTestimony\_Kerzner.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mark Kerzner

Position: FAV

I am writing to express my strong support for **SB0503** - Establishing an exception to the prohibition against operating or riding on a motorcycle without certain protective headgear for an individual at least 21 years of age who has been licensed to operate a motorcycle for at least 2 years or has completed a certain motorcycle safety course and for the individual's passenger.

I am a retired USAF Veteran with 41 years of Federal service, resident of Maryland since 1993, and proud lifetime member of ABATE of Maryland, Inc. helping to protect the rights of motorcycle riders throughout the State of Maryland.

Thirty-Three (33) States, almost 65% of the United States, have either no law requiring the wearing of a motorcycle helmet (3 States) or a law that allows the motorcycle rider a choice to wear a helmet after a certain age (30 States). I would like to see Maryland become the next State to allow the choice to wear a helmet while riding a motorcycle. While I understand the importance of helmet use in preventing head injuries and saving lives, I also recognize that mandatory helmet laws infringe upon the rights of responsible adults to make informed choices about their own safety. It is essential to strike a balance between promoting safety and respecting individual freedoms.

Here are the key points I urge you to consider:

1. **Personal Choice:** Senate Bill 503 recognizes that adults should have the freedom to choose whether to wear a helmet while riding a motorcycle. It respects the autonomy of riders to assess their own risk tolerance and make responsible decisions.
2. **Safety Training:** The bill requires motorcyclists to meet specific criteria before opting out of helmet use. These criteria include being 21 years or older, having at least two years of riding experience, and completing an approved safety course. This approach strikes a balance between personal choice and safety awareness.
3. **Helmets and Motorcycle Crashes:** Research has shown that helmets do not necessarily prevent motorcycle accidents. Instead, safe riding practices, education, and awareness play a more significant role in reducing accidents. Senate Bill 503 acknowledges this reality.
4. **Support from Motorcycle Advocacy Groups:** The American Motorcycle Association, the country's largest motorcycle rights advocacy group, supports voluntary helmet use. They recognize that helmets are not just safety devices but also personal apparel choices.
5. **Opposition and Considerations:** While some organizations oppose this bill, it is essential to recognize that adults should have the right to make their own decisions. The legislation strikes a reasonable balance by ensuring that riders meet specific qualifications before choosing not to wear a helmet.

I respectfully request that you support Senate Bill 503 and advocate for its passage. By doing so, you will uphold individual liberty while maintaining a responsible approach to motorcycle safety.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I appreciate your dedication to representing our State's interests.

Sincerely,

**Mark S. Kerzner**  
**Centreville, MD 21617**

# **1-Motorcycles-Registered-in-the-US-2002-2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: michelle mclane

Position: FAV

# Motorcycles registered in the United States, 2002–2023

June 2023

Eric R. Teoh



**Insurance Institute for Highway Safety**

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## Overview

The following tables summarize the U.S. motorcycle population between 2002 (the earliest available year of data) and 2023, based on Institute analyses of data provided by IHS Markit, an S&P 500 company (formerly R.L. Polk and Company).

Registration counts as of January 1 of each year were provided by year, state, and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) pattern (first 10 digits). Software developed and maintained by the Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI) was used to decode VIN patterns to determine make, series, and model year, and to append information maintained by HLDI on motorcycle type and antilock braking system (ABS) availability. Only on-road classes of motorcycles were included.

Since the VIN information is constantly improving, counts in this paper may differ slightly from the previous versions.

## Selected observations

- The number of on-road motorcycles registered in the U.S. has been generally increasing throughout these years, approximately doubling from 4.3 million in 2002 to 8.8 million in 2023 (Tables 1a–1c).
- California and Florida have the largest number of registered motorcycles by large margins.
- Cruisers and touring bikes are the largest classes of registered motorcycles (Table 2).
- Choppers are a relatively new class designation from manufacturers. This class probably is undercounted, as similar motorcycles are custom builds and not identifiable from VINs.
- Scooter registrations have been increasing, but also may be undercounted as many have engines smaller than 50 cc and state laws (including registration requirements) vary widely for vehicles with such small engines.
- Antilock braking system (ABS) availability has increased greatly among the on-road motorcycle fleet, from standard on 0.2% of registered motorcycles in 2002 to 19.9% in 2023 (Table 3). Similarly, registered motorcycles for which ABS was an optional feature increased from 1.3% in 2002 to 17.3% in 2023.
- The average age of registered motorcycles has increased from 9.0 years in 2002 to 14.3 years in 2023 (Table 4b). Half of motorcycles registered in 2023 were at least 14 years old.

**Table 1a. On-road motorcycles registered in the United States by state, 2002–2010**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Alabama	59,290	67,810	78,157	89,666	102,939	115,290	127,023	139,838	144,816
Alaska	13,046	14,287	15,656	16,928	18,266	19,789	21,274	22,681	23,663
Arizona	75,800	83,229	92,253	102,376	116,240	131,604	143,629	154,880	158,381
Arkansas	32,142	37,280	42,757	48,652	56,601	63,924	71,565	80,589	82,735
California	409,751	453,215	503,075	558,067	617,635	674,260	722,641	776,100	783,852
Colorado	104,260	114,492	123,032	131,660	140,516	150,024	160,856	171,201	172,943
Connecticut	56,522	62,234	68,056	72,982	77,820	83,210	87,897	91,772	92,256
Delaware	12,723	13,997	15,446	17,129	19,075	20,983	22,086	23,510	24,002
District of Columbia	2,425	2,652	2,717	2,624	2,733	3,025	3,338	3,537	3,745
Florida	239,917	272,426	312,877	360,718	418,137	474,494	512,500	552,161	550,839
Georgia	98,493	112,473	126,976	142,687	158,306	175,287	190,126	206,959	208,690
Hawaii	17,172	18,456	19,804	20,947	22,775	24,157	25,228	26,572	26,672
Idaho	28,764	31,191	34,065	37,270	41,500	46,668	52,003	58,033	58,353
Illinois	206,493	222,914	240,883	256,272	265,129	286,417	312,302	333,075	336,337
Indiana	119,065	130,929	141,744	152,320	161,974	170,682	180,206	194,410	199,372
Iowa	74,581	80,080	87,412	95,222	103,212	111,722	120,612	130,910	136,646
Kansas	47,561	51,871	56,953	62,563	68,743	75,845	82,909	91,684	95,898
Kentucky	52,241	61,715	71,326	80,911	90,550	99,203	108,137	115,610	118,509
Louisiana	50,204	56,966	63,440	69,246	74,966	83,453	89,588	96,679	98,732
Maine	22,228	27,055	30,754	35,334	39,474	42,658	40,878	50,519	53,021
Maryland	65,144	73,830	82,436	92,292	102,160	112,096	120,436	126,199	127,994
Massachusetts	94,084	105,653	115,875	122,745	127,320	132,051	135,798	139,530	139,894
Michigan	174,536	188,757	203,084	216,423	228,991	240,820	253,499	265,262	263,300
Minnesota	123,623	136,491	149,113	161,674	172,942	184,433	196,623	210,750	214,399
Mississippi	25,340	29,205	33,476	37,892	42,597	48,085	52,375	57,705	58,316
Missouri	67,772	76,083	85,016	94,990	105,932	117,524	127,705	138,660	142,398
Montana	19,278	21,475	25,145	28,695	22,404	24,502	26,691	30,577	33,040
Nebraska	23,420	26,309	29,757	33,453	37,140	41,222	45,245	49,928	52,633
Nevada	34,149	37,994	42,017	47,708	54,092	59,975	64,858	68,020	67,657
New Hampshire	45,639	41,763	41,512	53,625	67,450	71,713	74,186	76,528	76,027
New Jersey	106,254	117,456	128,760	138,184	148,618	154,177	163,068	166,964	165,480
New Mexico	32,934	36,287	40,259	44,023	48,616	54,090	59,822	66,293	68,363
New York	245,670	260,901	260,130	277,364	294,453	294,391	312,301	331,570	339,951
North Carolina	122,811	138,792	150,888	167,358	185,118	202,939	219,194	235,280	233,908
North Dakota	13,561	15,030	16,695	18,688	20,886	23,313	25,922	28,876	30,220
Ohio	223,987	243,540	262,707	281,715	301,867	321,789	344,078	367,175	369,502
Oklahoma	51,721	58,637	65,428	72,160	79,788	90,902	101,105	111,541	114,980
Oregon	63,925	68,731	74,173	78,581	84,462	92,136	100,712	111,665	116,259
Pennsylvania	213,509	234,970	254,614	280,477	308,343	336,041	355,475	382,162	396,576
Rhode Island	17,345	19,298	21,230	23,265	25,086	26,773	28,101	29,240	29,389
South Carolina	62,012	69,125	74,072	80,818	88,692	98,296	107,702	116,474	114,312
South Dakota	22,522	24,912	27,421	29,943	32,712	35,528	38,252	41,186	42,537
Tennessee	76,307	85,356	95,564	108,784	124,476	140,461	156,605	171,545	172,257
Texas	213,404	241,930	274,061	306,868	347,584	388,839	428,321	479,281	483,646
Utah	36,440	40,066	44,764	49,685	55,434	63,211	72,822	85,761	90,750
Vermont	14,739	16,465	18,000	19,384	21,014	22,984	24,804	26,636	27,004
Virginia	94,462	106,749	119,140	134,287	149,633	164,977	178,395	191,056	195,275
Washington	118,624	128,430	140,416	155,881	173,489	193,190	210,921	230,094	234,731
West Virginia	25,933	29,650	33,112	37,130	41,566	46,260	51,098	55,731	56,909
Wisconsin	173,636	184,019	201,907	213,036	232,332	246,596	266,809	283,209	295,199
Wyoming	13,812	15,519	17,310	19,013	20,810	23,105	25,693	27,996	28,462
Total	4,339,271	4,788,695	5,255,465	5,779,715	6,342,598	6,905,114	7,443,414	8,023,614	8,150,830

**Table 1b. On-road motorcycles registered in the United States by state, 2011–2020**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alabama	149,066	153,268	157,392	161,045	164,337	167,508	171,702	174,054	174,306	171,719
Alaska	24,027	24,528	25,215	25,690	25,861	25,974	26,242	25,303	24,365	23,940
Arizona	161,146	166,837	174,408	184,265	191,437	200,669	207,615	206,331	213,187	216,925
Arkansas	82,198	81,104	78,888	78,222	76,872	75,280	74,343	72,696	71,821	70,656
California	784,402	799,557	823,309	862,857	896,786	934,182	959,555	955,184	958,184	958,426
Colorado	171,897	170,241	171,356	178,938	182,285	186,583	187,876	189,010	189,607	202,642
Connecticut	91,572	89,321	92,770	92,133	92,184	92,186	94,115	92,710	91,366	89,870
Delaware	24,577	25,852	26,383	26,692	26,914	27,119	27,101	26,688	26,641	26,659
District of Columbia	4,009	4,290	4,461	5,019	5,155	5,226	5,185	5,333	5,297	5,260
Florida	540,033	546,197	544,116	561,756	579,088	596,575	603,293	599,269	602,710	621,780
Georgia	210,095	209,605	206,989	205,688	208,138	210,965	209,908	214,378	214,886	218,647
Hawaii	26,755	26,758	24,040	29,285	31,360	28,476	32,660	55,940	59,836	36,029
Idaho	56,688	58,962	57,906	60,759	62,687	64,127	64,707	65,111	66,923	68,136
Illinois	337,142	326,243	320,214	322,228	320,393	318,949	297,868	302,074	299,908	304,302
Indiana	199,584	202,645	203,613	206,999	210,582	230,055	235,090	233,099	229,680	230,983
Iowa	140,666	144,533	147,680	152,126	156,386	159,837	162,946	163,687	165,065	168,906
Kansas	98,822	100,998	101,875	103,224	104,118	104,327	104,534	103,980	103,395	102,396
Kentucky	117,980	118,323	117,267	117,805	119,612	119,323	118,185	117,255	115,911	118,730
Louisiana	97,935	91,869	89,880	92,695	92,517	92,445	90,313	87,565	84,968	82,293
Maine	49,135	52,902	56,810	55,095	57,962	58,064	57,507	56,569	60,208	61,496
Maryland	126,758	124,517	121,598	122,889	123,712	121,329	118,942	115,104	113,248	111,665
Massachusetts	138,547	142,097	141,434	142,165	143,519	145,717	146,943	146,583	145,612	144,713
Michigan	259,529	254,596	250,416	249,474	247,186	247,662	250,685	249,878	248,198	245,211
Minnesota	214,671	211,363	210,223	214,323	219,045	219,896	215,022	185,399	210,051	208,662
Mississippi	57,943	55,044	51,849	53,105	53,017	51,805	50,607	50,470	50,323	50,495
Missouri	143,207	141,368	136,564	138,274	139,246	139,350	139,969	137,248	136,006	131,860
Montana	34,492	35,750	39,131	47,078	50,906	54,359	57,637	59,893	62,778	65,564
Nebraska	53,963	53,275	52,719	54,346	54,832	54,189	55,110	53,932	54,049	57,422
Nevada	66,411	65,546	65,774	69,024	71,633	73,797	74,560	75,749	77,713	82,185
New Hampshire	74,830	74,356	74,709	75,448	76,770	78,595	80,321	81,625	82,739	83,368
New Jersey	159,848	163,349	159,114	158,894	158,890	160,984	161,825	161,456	161,376	162,285
New Mexico	69,580	66,921	66,501	67,174	67,642	66,905	61,907	63,472	63,776	64,628
New York	344,314	338,951	354,953	360,493	361,983	365,742	370,884	370,585	369,858	369,354
North Carolina	224,409	224,131	216,438	216,845	215,158	241,240	255,144	239,015	237,454	243,807
North Dakota	30,647	32,742	28,236	34,573	36,764	37,893	37,828	37,705	37,498	37,134
Ohio	368,684	366,099	370,806	375,925	383,630	387,028	392,162	390,672	393,138	393,297
Oklahoma	116,683	117,092	117,771	120,638	123,150	123,941	122,721	120,653	118,115	118,580
Oregon	116,062	116,314	113,298	119,721	122,312	124,994	127,801	129,291	131,107	131,621
Pennsylvania	407,843	409,968	409,242	412,692	367,869	381,859	392,007	394,876	398,715	400,873
Rhode Island	29,328	28,807	28,733	28,832	28,983	28,682	28,991	29,007	28,254	27,572
South Carolina	108,503	112,827	103,431	115,591	128,890	135,413	137,796	134,971	140,867	146,436
South Dakota	43,268	44,739	45,675	47,627	48,869	49,940	49,655	50,636	51,181	51,284
Tennessee	171,146	167,348	165,229	158,686	148,915	91,902	39,212	28,770	81,182	164,539
Texas	473,945	452,553	435,567	446,355	452,767	402,724	386,926	378,456	377,373	394,139
Utah	95,410	100,308	99,543	98,866	92,277	87,891	87,683	87,510	89,736	93,280
Vermont	26,886	25,603	24,992	25,004	24,887	25,008	24,768	24,288	24,131	24,078
Virginia	193,722	189,710	191,696	191,202	201,393	206,164	206,092	202,230	197,407	196,725
Washington	233,511	238,426	235,451	235,261	239,122	245,012	246,933	231,331	246,728	242,246
West Virginia	56,489	57,357	54,614	54,112	53,529	53,596	53,267	52,845	52,237	52,956
Wisconsin	306,270	299,606	314,047	308,661	320,414	312,193	324,454	312,155	325,300	312,873
Wyoming	28,181	26,548	25,954	26,416	26,516	26,847	25,911	25,322	25,620	24,978
Total	8,142,809	8,131,344	8,130,280	8,292,215	8,388,500	8,440,527	8,454,508	8,367,363	8,490,034	8,613,625



**Table 1c. On-road motorcycles registered in the United States by state, 2021–2023**

	2021	2022	2023
Alabama	167,663	171,830	173,795
Alaska	23,095	22,048	22,394
Arizona	222,728	226,581	228,749
Arkansas	72,545	75,583	75,902
California	953,652	941,548	936,809
Colorado	201,536	201,921	203,396
Connecticut	88,132	88,084	86,787
Delaware	26,791	26,934	27,118
District of Columbia	5,025	4,873	4,610
Florida	646,062	657,042	668,046
Georgia	227,728	231,600	236,276
Hawaii	34,807	34,754	34,805
Idaho	69,130	73,904	75,017
Illinois	285,175	287,170	280,058
Indiana	234,703	238,313	238,729
Iowa	168,834	170,264	171,380
Kansas	100,872	101,014	101,530
Kentucky	121,807	123,532	124,923
Louisiana	80,534	79,690	80,208
Maine	60,082	60,476	63,835
Maryland	113,826	119,334	119,139
Massachusetts	147,988	155,802	155,408
Michigan	234,981	245,187	249,872
Minnesota	203,830	212,677	208,616
Mississippi	51,526	52,496	53,311
Missouri	126,908	126,161	126,441
Montana	68,572	72,738	77,212
Nebraska	57,441	58,582	58,922
Nevada	83,121	84,002	86,060
New Hampshire	84,560	87,928	90,235
New Jersey	154,441	157,675	161,348
New Mexico	64,653	65,674	66,525
New York	364,106	365,769	370,101
North Carolina	250,453	252,175	253,643
North Dakota	35,427	35,796	35,589
Ohio	390,096	405,827	407,952
Oklahoma	119,572	120,152	120,364
Oregon	129,477	134,137	136,648
Pennsylvania	385,552	404,904	403,039
Rhode Island	27,472	28,183	28,376
South Carolina	149,110	152,469	153,359
South Dakota	51,079	53,119	54,596
Tennessee	173,921	179,376	184,982
Texas	381,161	392,069	394,351
Utah	96,773	101,112	105,029
Vermont	22,870	23,751	23,775
Virginia	188,283	192,498	194,400
Washington	243,146	244,107	236,862
West Virginia	49,599	51,753	54,165
Wisconsin	320,980	307,381	320,021
Wyoming	25,195	25,366	25,772
Total	8,587,020	8,725,361	8,790,480

**Table 2. On-road motorcycles registered in the United States by type of motorcycle, 2002–2023**

	Chopper		Standard		Cruiser		Touring		Sport touring		Unclad sport		Sport		Supersport		Dual purpose		Scooter		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2002	914	0.0	472,934	10.9	2,060,158	47.5	626,302	14.4	36,113	0.8	33,010	0.8	308,170	7.1	376,307	8.7	207,778	4.8	217,585	5.0	4,339,271	100.0
2003	1,709	0.0	461,304	9.6	2,323,679	48.5	701,567	14.7	43,242	0.9	48,559	1.0	325,860	6.8	426,083	8.9	222,354	4.6	234,338	4.9	4,788,695	100.0
2004	4,931	0.1	444,254	8.5	2,594,271	49.4	780,756	14.9	52,755	1.0	65,798	1.3	339,464	6.5	479,291	9.1	236,722	4.5	257,223	4.9	5,255,465	100.0
2005	10,824	0.2	433,437	7.5	2,882,869	49.9	868,197	15.0	62,181	1.1	85,845	1.5	354,076	6.1	543,426	9.4	254,294	4.4	284,566	4.9	5,779,715	100.0
2006	17,581	0.3	420,525	6.6	3,167,944	49.9	966,226	15.2	71,369	1.1	106,132	1.7	372,698	5.9	615,877	9.7	276,918	4.4	327,328	5.2	6,342,598	100.0
2007	22,888	0.3	401,274	5.8	3,431,192	49.7	1,075,683	15.6	80,514	1.2	124,237	1.8	396,213	5.7	689,725	10.0	304,720	4.4	378,668	5.5	6,905,114	100.0
2008	26,268	0.4	388,934	5.2	3,669,536	49.3	1,177,924	15.8	90,559	1.2	142,437	1.9	416,662	5.6	759,297	10.2	334,882	4.5	436,915	5.9	7,443,414	100.0
2009	27,923	0.3	377,733	4.7	3,880,290	48.4	1,265,171	15.8	104,473	1.3	163,481	2.0	437,724	5.5	807,326	10.1	372,406	4.6	587,087	7.3	8,023,614	100.0
2010	31,224	0.4	356,771	4.4	3,910,391	48.0	1,327,893	16.3	113,153	1.4	173,372	2.1	435,819	5.3	798,585	9.8	384,688	4.7	618,934	7.6	8,150,830	100.0
2011	32,966	0.4	335,243	4.1	3,877,183	47.6	1,377,289	16.9	121,784	1.5	176,984	2.2	425,828	5.2	775,228	9.5	389,049	4.8	631,255	7.8	8,142,809	100.0
2012	33,972	0.4	315,679	3.9	3,814,556	46.9	1,430,785	17.6	131,048	1.6	181,085	2.2	420,622	5.2	743,697	9.1	398,738	4.9	661,162	8.1	8,131,344	100.0
2013	34,289	0.4	301,422	3.7	3,754,301	46.2	1,487,578	18.3	139,855	1.7	182,839	2.2	417,838	5.1	712,549	8.8	412,520	5.1	687,089	8.5	8,130,280	100.0
2014	34,791	0.4	298,565	3.6	3,759,387	45.3	1,580,893	19.1	151,159	1.8	189,333	2.3	423,102	5.1	701,964	8.5	441,698	5.3	711,323	8.6	8,292,215	100.0
2015	34,987	0.4	292,729	3.5	3,728,190	44.4	1,659,827	19.8	162,363	1.9	203,415	2.4	423,789	5.1	687,977	8.2	464,375	5.5	730,848	8.7	8,388,500	100.0
2016	34,826	0.4	293,305	3.5	3,660,648	43.4	1,720,675	20.4	170,565	2.0	217,508	2.6	425,933	5.0	674,473	8.0	487,455	5.8	755,139	8.9	8,440,527	100.0
2017	34,735	0.4	296,842	3.5	3,602,170	42.6	1,772,122	21.0	176,049	2.1	232,587	2.8	425,283	5.0	652,510	7.7	509,620	6.0	752,590	8.9	8,454,508	100.0
2018	34,348	0.4	300,416	3.6	3,507,465	41.9	1,808,768	21.6	178,483	2.1	243,556	2.9	410,273	4.9	603,909	7.2	527,275	6.3	752,870	9.0	8,367,363	100.0
2019	34,306	0.4	322,231	3.8	3,499,019	41.2	1,882,678	22.2	182,374	2.1	259,781	3.1	413,588	4.9	585,172	6.9	560,372	6.6	750,513	8.8	8,490,034	100.0
2020	34,568	0.4	343,496	4.0	3,493,251	40.6	1,961,739	22.8	187,247	2.2	279,387	3.2	423,529	4.9	569,120	6.6	594,202	6.9	727,086	8.4	8,613,625	100.0
2021	33,473	0.4	362,820	4.2	3,418,334	39.8	1,982,335	23.1	189,482	2.2	294,200	3.4	427,101	5.0	540,434	6.3	627,547	7.3	711,294	8.3	8,587,020	100.0
2022	33,471	0.4	387,129	4.4	3,413,178	39.1	2,039,541	23.4	193,878	2.2	316,956	3.6	437,272	5.0	521,303	6.0	680,065	7.8	702,568	8.1	8,725,361	100.0
2023	32,873	0.4	419,531	4.8	3,357,213	38.2	2,067,821	23.5	195,287	2.2	337,063	3.8	445,233	5.1	504,689	5.7	735,149	8.4	695,621	7.9	8,790,480	100.0

**Table 3.** On-road motorcycles registered in the United States by availability of antilock braking systems (ABS), 2002–2023

	Standard		Optional		Not available		Total*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2002	7,718	0.2	58,260	1.3	3,670,657	84.6	4,339,271	100.0
2003	10,768	0.2	89,437	1.9	4,093,995	85.5	4,788,695	100.0
2004	14,362	0.3	124,062	2.4	4,539,457	86.4	5,255,465	100.0
2005	17,583	0.3	155,788	2.7	5,047,406	87.3	5,779,715	100.0
2006	21,394	0.3	187,003	2.9	5,596,310	88.2	6,342,598	100.0
2007	27,381	0.4	217,217	3.1	6,146,496	89.0	6,905,114	100.0
2008	33,820	0.5	279,350	3.8	6,640,094	89.2	7,443,414	100.0
2009	44,795	0.6	408,858	5.1	7,103,544	88.5	8,023,614	100.0
2010	56,592	0.7	507,420	6.2	7,148,690	87.7	8,150,830	100.0
2011	79,847	1.0	586,470	7.2	7,068,464	86.8	8,142,809	100.0
2012	126,825	1.6	675,902	8.3	6,943,360	85.4	8,131,344	100.0
2013	184,679	2.3	783,654	9.6	6,786,868	83.5	8,130,280	100.0
2014	265,298	3.2	918,195	11.1	6,738,113	81.3	8,292,215	100.0
2015	413,407	4.9	999,077	11.9	6,624,879	79.0	8,388,500	100.0
2016	572,070	6.8	1,062,839	12.6	6,468,957	76.6	8,440,527	100.0
2017	730,065	8.6	1,119,870	13.2	6,294,811	74.5	8,454,508	100.0
2018	875,537	10.5	1,176,793	14.1	6,038,094	72.2	8,367,363	100.0
2019	1,021,729	12.0	1,270,287	15.0	5,933,367	69.9	8,490,034	100.0
2020	1,189,197	13.8	1,365,746	15.9	5,812,737	67.5	8,613,625	100.0
2021	1,346,559	15.7	1,408,819	16.4	5,594,969	65.2	8,587,020	100.0
2022	1,559,767	17.9	1,473,385	16.9	5,461,961	62.6	8,725,361	100.0
2023	1,750,205	19.9	1,518,007	17.3	5,300,602	60.3	8,790,480	100.0

\* Total includes motorcycles with unknown ABS availability.

**Table 4a. On-road motorcycles registered in the United States by vehicle age, 2002–2023**

	< 1 year		1–3 years		4–6 years		7–9 years		10+ years		Total*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2002	101,849	2.3	1,210,311	27.9	714,458	16.5	520,098	12.0	1,768,489	40.8	4,339,271	100.0
2003	105,207	2.2	1,418,114	29.6	823,651	17.2	576,525	12.0	1,842,075	38.5	4,788,695	100.0
2004	64,959	1.2	1,648,075	31.4	992,680	18.9	620,363	11.8	1,907,514	36.3	5,255,465	100.0
2005	109,983	1.9	1,750,126	30.3	1,216,930	21.1	678,725	11.7	2,003,141	34.7	5,779,715	100.0
2006	109,937	1.7	1,887,829	29.8	1,433,004	22.6	781,411	12.3	2,110,800	33.3	6,342,598	100.0
2007	101,534	1.5	1,959,168	28.4	1,697,984	24.6	938,083	13.6	2,190,092	31.7	6,905,114	100.0
2008	72,535	1.0	2,147,369	28.8	1,748,934	23.5	1,141,761	15.3	2,315,711	31.1	7,443,414	100.0
2009	78,114	1.0	2,209,300	27.5	1,881,404	23.4	1,340,845	16.7	2,498,058	31.1	8,023,614	100.0
2010	33,196	0.4	1,849,471	22.7	1,980,444	24.3	1,578,964	19.4	2,694,338	33.1	8,150,830	100.0
2011	32,197	0.4	1,357,100	16.7	2,192,561	26.9	1,609,896	19.8	2,938,032	36.1	8,142,809	100.0
2012	52,896	0.7	1,018,808	12.5	2,125,350	26.1	1,694,239	20.8	3,228,184	39.7	8,131,344	100.0
2013	35,833	0.4	829,808	10.2	1,900,674	23.4	1,744,678	21.5	3,608,267	44.4	8,130,280	100.0
2014	46,970	0.6	977,655	11.8	1,369,822	16.5	1,970,409	23.8	3,922,271	47.3	8,292,215	100.0
2015	37,440	0.4	1,098,578	13.1	1,012,197	12.1	1,926,344	23.0	4,309,933	51.4	8,388,500	100.0
2016	31,350	0.4	1,119,194	13.3	848,102	10.0	1,716,769	20.3	4,722,105	55.9	8,440,527	100.0
2017	30,860	0.4	1,092,067	12.9	992,889	11.7	1,219,614	14.4	5,116,283	60.5	8,454,508	100.0
2018	27,282	0.3	1,031,259	12.3	1,110,242	13.3	898,706	10.7	5,248,538	62.7	8,367,363	100.0
2019	28,173	0.3	971,335	11.4	1,131,220	13.3	768,262	9.0	5,474,047	64.5	8,490,034	100.0
2020	27,871	0.3	942,146	10.9	1,121,467	13.0	908,938	10.6	5,453,349	63.3	8,613,625	100.0
2021	18,997	0.2	935,567	10.9	1,057,144	12.3	1,012,808	11.8	5,367,498	62.5	8,587,020	100.0
2022	44,370	0.5	969,539	11.1	992,098	11.4	1,038,055	11.9	5,444,445	62.4	8,725,361	100.0
2023	25,602	0.3	1,047,304	11.9	933,730	10.6	1,017,647	11.6	5,485,413	62.4	8,790,480	100.0

\* Total includes motorcycles with unknown model year.

**Table 4b. Average and median age (years) of on-road motorcycles registered in the United States, 2002–2023**

	Average	Median
2002	9.0	7
2003	8.8	7
2004	8.7	6
2005	8.6	6
2006	8.5	6
2007	8.4	6
2008	8.5	6
2009	8.5	6
2010	9.0	7
2011	9.5	7
2012	9.9	8
2013	10.4	9
2014	10.8	9
2015	11.1	10
2016	11.5	10
2017	11.9	11
2018	12.3	12
2019	12.8	12
2020	13.2	13
2021	13.6	13
2022	14.0	14
2023	14.3	14

## HLDI motorcycle classification

### Chopper



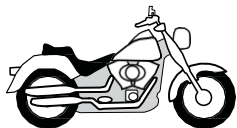
Chopper-style motorcycles are closely related to cruisers. They have a longer wheelbase that results from an extended front fork configuration. The lengthened wheelbase reduces maneuverability. Choppers generally are highly customized and, as a result, more costly. As the term “chopper” implies, the motorcycle is derived by chopping off or removing parts from a typical cruiser with the intent of reducing weight or bulk for the sake of speed. Its reduced maneuverability is exaggerated further by a wide rear tire that assists in acceleration.

### Standard



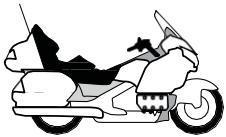
Standard motorcycle designs are basic, with many remaining in production for 10 years or more without redesign. However, in recent model years, standard motorcycles have begun utilizing technological advances in chassis and engine design, such as antilock braking systems and fuel-injected engines. Riding position typically is upright and similar to that of a cruiser, but with foot pegs placed farther rearward. The riding position, coupled with better ground clearance than a cruiser, gives standard motorcycles better handling characteristics. Engine displacements are smaller than those for cruisers.

### Cruiser



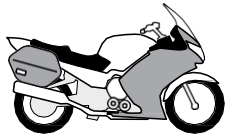
Cruiser motorcycles mimic the style of earlier American motorcycles from the 1930s to the early 1960s, such as those made by Harley-Davidson and Indian. Although cruisers have benefited from advances in technology and metallurgy, the basic design is still very similar to early motorcycles. The riding position places the feet forward of the seat and the hands near shoulder height, and the upper body is erect or leaning back slightly. This position allows long-distance comfort and compromises some degree of control. Cruisers have limited cornering ability because of a low-slung design. Cruiser engines produce more torque and less peak horsepower compared with motorcycles from the sport classes. Cruisers are among the heaviest of motorcycles and can be used with a sidecar.

## Touring



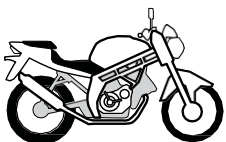
Touring motorcycles are equipped with high-displacement/high-torque engines for carrying a passenger and luggage. The Honda Goldwing, which is one of the best-selling motorcycles in this class, has an 1,833-cc engine. Touring motorcycles are among the longest and heaviest motorcycles, and they can weigh in excess of 800 pounds. Touring motorcycles offer wind protection for the rider, high-capacity fuel tanks, the ability to carry luggage, and an upright riding position that is comfortable for long distances. Although any motorcycle can be equipped and used for touring, touring motorcycles are designed for this purpose. They incorporate technological advances such as antilock brakes and airbags and are more likely to include features such as reverse gear, cruise control, heated hand grips, driver-to-passenger communication systems, navigation, and audio systems.

## Sport touring



Sport-touring motorcycles are similar in design to sport motorcycles but have some features typically found on touring motorcycles. Sport-touring motorcycles typically are derived from sport class frames and share components such as engines and drive trains. Sport tourers normally are equipped with touring features such as saddlebags, high windshields, larger fairings, heated grips, and larger seats—features not found on other sport-class motorcycles. Among the other sport-class motorcycles, sport tourers tend to have the largest engines, and riding positions that are more upright. More than any other sport-class motorcycle, sport tourers can accommodate passengers due to larger engines, upright riding positions, and larger seats.

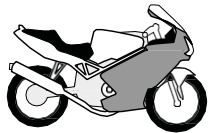
## Unclad sport



Unclad sport motorcycles occupy a relatively new market niche; however, they are retro in styling. Sometimes referred to as “naked” or “hooligan” motorcycles, unclad sport motorcycles are derivatives of sport/supersport motorcycles. They do not have full body panels or fairing coverings typically found on sport/supersport motorcycles. Compared with sport and supersport motorcycles, unclad sport motorcycles generally have lower horsepower. The riding position places the feet under the seat and the hands below shoulder height. The rider’s knees are bent and the upper body has a slight forward lean, giving unclad sport motorcycles a riding position that is more comfortable than the sport class. The reduced

horsepower and riding position make them more user friendly and suitable for everyday riding. Some motorcycles in this class serve as beginner motorcycles, whereas others are as powerful and agile as some sport and supersport motorcycles and are targeted at premium customers (e.g., Ducati and Aprilia).

## Sport



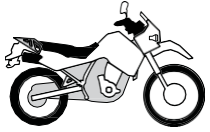
Sport motorcycles are light and powerful. Their power-to-weight ratios are second only to the supersport class. They benefit from advances in design and technology intended for racing; however, they are not considered racing-specification machines. The riding position places the feet under the seat and the hands below shoulder height. The rider's knees are bent, and the upper body has a forward lean. This riding position improves control when cornering and accelerating. All sport motorcycles have extensive body paneling and fairing covers to provide wind protection and assist in aerodynamics. Sport motorcycles can be equipped with side bags or a rear trunk to provide limited touring ability, but they do not have the features and amenities typically found in the touring or sport-touring classes. Sport motorcycles have a wide range of engine displacements. The riding position and lower power-to-weight ratios make sport class motorcycles more suitable for everyday street use than supersport motorcycles. Sport motorcycles are capable of high speeds, but they do not offer the acceleration, stability, and handling of racing-specification machines.

## Supersport



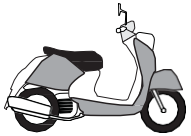
Supersport motorcycles are consumer versions of the motorcycles used by factory racing teams and use racing specifications as benchmarks in design. Their range of engine displacements is limited to meet racing requirements of the class. The power-to-weight ratios of supersport motorcycles are higher than any other mass-produced motor vehicle. As racing specification machines, measures are taken to reduce weight and increase power, thus making these motorcycles quick in acceleration, nimble in handling, and capable of high speeds. The riding position is suitable for racing, and places the feet under the seat and the hands below shoulder height. The rider's knees are bent and the upper body has a forward lean. There also is less space between the seat and feet than for sport motorcycles to provide better rider/racer control. Supersport motorcycles have extensive body paneling and fairing coverings, but generally only offer good wind protection when the rider is in a crouched riding position.

### Dual purpose



Dual-purpose motorcycles have similarities with off-road motorcycles. However, they are equipped with road-ready features such as turn signals, brake lights, and horns. They also use four-stroke engines for compliance with emissions requirements. They generally have larger displacement engines than off-road motorcycles, along with a more comfortable riding position.

### Scooter



Scooters are characterized by small wheels, automatic transmissions, small engines, and a step-through configuration that allows riders to place both feet on a running board with knees together. However, larger scooters with engine displacements greater than 250 cc are becoming more popular. The BMW C650GT and the Suzuki Burgman are examples of the increasing displacements of highway-capable scooters.



# helmet letter to senators 2024.pdf

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Position: FAV

Senators,

My name is Michelle {Shelli} McLane. I am an avid motorcyclist. I have been a licensed rider since the late 80's; so for almost 40 years. In my time of using motorcycles as one form of transportation and for fun excursions or events that benefit different individuals or groups via charity events, I have run the gamut of being able to operate a motorcycle without the use of a helmet to being required and mandated to utilize one for the "safe operation" of the vehicle.

Firstly, the use of a helmet has zero to do with safe operation of said vehicle. It does not click in place or hold you onto your saddle (aka motorcycle seat).

Helmets are not attached to the vehicle and do not provide any real form of protection if one is hit by a 3500 lb vehicle.

Helmets do not warn riders of oncoming problems or distracted drivers operating their vehicles in an unsafe manner.

Helmets DO NOT PREVENT accidents caused by thoughtless vehicle operators. Education and awareness of what is going on around the rider, does. I have had thoughtless car drivers toss cigarette butts out of their windows while riding by them on a multilane road and have had cigarettes lodge between my helmet and my head, burning my face in the process multiple times. Same with drink cups and cans thrown from vehicles. I have had them hit my body, my face, my helmet and that hurts a whole bunch. Guaranteed!

I have dealt with careless drivers of pickup trucks and cars, not having secured loads in the beds of their vehicles, trailers or tied to the roofs of their vehicles, where household items have come out of the vehicle and hit the roads and ending up directly in the path of my bike. Having to play dodgeball on the road due to unsecured loads is zero fun, and usually the drivers know something fell out or off of their vehicles and do nothing about it.

I literally witnessed a woman be dragged to her death after being caught under the undercarriage of a pickup truck, after the driver she was riding with lost control of his motorcycle due to an illegal lane change and arbitrary stop by a car driver, which occurred directly in front of him. The driver was injured but was alive. His wife, his partner and passenger, was thrown into oncoming traffic and her helmet lodged under the rear drive axle of the pickup truck, who was unable to avoid passing over top of her. Talk about a nightmare which I can never unsee, and a nightmare that gentleman operating the truck has to live with, not to mention her husbands' pain: all because of a thoughtless driver.

Secondly, I have personally dealt with multiple accidents; (1) on my (and as a passenger on 2 other) motorcycle.

First was when I was approximately 21 years old. (I have been riding since I was 16 years old) My mistake was getting on the back of a friends' bike after we had all been lightly drinking alcohol. Or at least I had lightly consumed (2 beers in the span of 6 hours.) The guy, whose bike I was a passenger on, I found out later, had consumed much more than I. We were on Gorsuch Rd in Westminster, and he failed to negotiate a curve properly. The bike went down, he slid with the bike and broke his leg – I was thrown off and HAD I had a helmet on at that time, I would not be here today, as my head barely missed the guardrail that I landed against. The added bulk of the helmet would have broken my neck. Even the officer who showed up at the scene stated that. I ended up with road rash; gravel that had to be picked out over a period of several days.

Second and Third, had 2 different drivers pull out in front of me. Once as a passenger, once operating my own motorcycle. In neither of those accidents did my head ever hit the ground or any other object due to my proximity awareness and how I rolled. I have been lucky, yes, but during the third accident, in 2010, when the driver pulled out in front of me, I was wearing a helmet and the bike went 80 feet in one direction down the hill on rt 26 going down into Baltimore City and I went 80 feet down the same hill only slightly separated from my motorcycle by about 7 feet distance.

The helmet I was wearing didn't stop the accident from happening. It sure as heck didn't stop the other driver from pulling out in front of me with a span of about 20 ft between my bike and where he pulled out from a side road and stopped his vehicle across the lane of traffic I was riding in, to take a phone call, which was very visible through the window of the truck I was looking at; that was blocking my lane of travel. Other drivers saw the same and told the cops that showed up that info. Of course, that driver was "never found". Again, my head never hit the ground or any other object (ie vehicle, vehicle tires etc)

The Shock Docs and their medical minions like to trot out all these facts and figures but fail to cite their sources when hammering on legal licensed motorcyclists, and They way overinflate and fail to differentiate between TBI's caused by motorcycles, and ones that occur in daily life; as can be seen below. They also use a lot of literature well over 20 plus years old when there weren't as many motorcycles on the road.

Right now, in the state of Maryland, according to the IIHS (pdf attached) there were over 65,144 registered motorcycles in Maryland in 2002 – 2023 that number has gone up to 119,139, so a net increase of 54000 registered motorcycles. Please keep that in mind as you read the facts below.

Some facts I have sourced from the internet with their sites cited below content:

- Around 1.7 million Americans sustain a TBI every year.
- About 1,365,000 Americans are treated for a TBI and released from an emergency department annually.
- An estimated 5.4 million people in the US live with disabilities associated with a TBI.
- Without support, 75% of persons in the US with a TBI lose their jobs within 90 days of returning to work.
- The lifetime cost for each severe TBI survivor is estimated to be more than \$4 million.
- Car accidents, falls, and violence are the most common causes of traumatic brain injury.
- About 80% of all TBI cases are categorized as a mild TBI ([Source](#)).

***Car accidents are the leading cause of TBI-related deaths of children and young adults between the ages of 5-24 (Source).***

The AAST reports that the estimated annual cost of the five or so million people living with disability from a TBI on the US is around \$37.8 billion

<https://treatnow.org/knowledgebase/car-accidents-and-brain-injury-statistics-2020/>

Knowing, this now, why aren't helmets included as safety gear in automobiles and other enclosed vehicles? Why aren't they required when stepping outside of ones house? Or even INSIDE ones house?

University of Md Shock Trauma docs and their medical minions like fabricating lots of erroneous information:

From their OWN LITERATURE – the below chart in a report (attached) issued in Feb, 2023 . Data addressed is 2021 for latest current data. Actual ***registered motorcycles in 2023 are 119,136.***

IN 2021 there were 113,836 registered motorcycles. During that year there were a little over 1300 accidents/crashes and out of that number there were 76 fatalities and of those only 15 were supposedly un-helmeted.


or put it another way	registered motorcycles	113,826	100.00%
	crashes	1,343	1.18%
	fatalities	76	0.0668%
	unhelmeted	15	0.01318%

In other terms, those people who lost their lives are .01318% of the registered motorcyclists. Not even a full 1% of the registered motorcyclists. And while any loss of life is tragic, Death happens to all of us eventually! So, if going by what the medical minions keep espousing every year, Maryland should be having many more accidents and deaths per capita than what is **factually** happening. For the 1343 people involved in accidents, there were registered 112,483 who weren't in accidents out of the registered 113,826 registered motorcycles. Something sure does stink with the numbers they fabricate yearly.

In addition; their report does not state whether those riders were LEGALLY REGISTERED LAW ABIDING RIDERS. Their report does not state the types of bikes they were riding or where the accidents that took those 15 lives occurred. This report does not differentiate between LEGALLY REGISTERED MOTORCYCLISTS AND ILLEGAL DIRTBIKE RIDERS OR ATV RIDERS OR ILLEGAL MOTORCYCLISTS.

By their own admission – or serious Omissions, their report is faulty by not including this information and it sure is not current and up to date. The last info available for this report was 2021 – yet the report was issued in Feb 2023 as current and valid.

One very visible take away is out of 119139



**UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND**  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
SHOCK, TRAUMA AND ANESTHESIOLOGY  
RESEARCH CENTER  
National Study Center for Trauma & Emergency Medical Services

**MOTORCYCLE CRASHES AND HELMET USE**

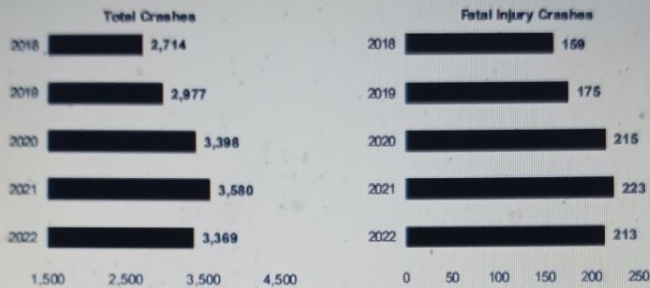
*Prepared By:*  
National Study Center for Trauma and EMS  
University of Maryland School of Medicine  
Shock, Trauma and Anesthesiology Research Center  
February 2023

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
Total Number of Motorcycle Crashes (Benchmarks)	1,748	1,551	1,613	1,481	1,517	1,451	1,274	1,253	1,289	1,343	
Number of motorcyclist fatalities (Driver Specific Benchmarks)	75	61	66	70	72	82	57	75	78	76	
Number of unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities (Maryland Crash Data)	15	9	12	9	8	17	9	7	6	15	
Percent of fatalities that were unhelmeted	20.0%	14.8%	18.2%	12.9%	11.1%	20.7%	15.8%	9.3%	7.7%	19.7%	
5-Year Average						15.41%					14.67%
						2012-2016				2017-2021	

In our sister state of Pennsylvania, a helmet choice state, the following data (latest I could find was 2022) shows a physical downward trend from helmets vs no helmets – with helmeted riders dying more frequently than non-helmeted riders. In 2017 there were 392,007 registered motorcycles, in 2022 there were 404,904; a net increase of 12,897 of registered motorcycles. Keep those numbers in mind when looking at the data below.

**Motorcycle Crashes—Five-Year Trends**

In 2022, total motorcycle crashes decreased 5.9% from 2021 while motorcycle fatal injury crashes decreased 4.6% from 2021.

**Motorcycle Fatalities—Five-Year Trends**

Year	Fatalities
2018	164
2019	174
2020	217
2021	226
2022	217
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>998</b>

Of the 217 fatalities in 2022 involving motorcycle drivers or passengers:

- ▶ 207 (95.4%) were drivers
- ▶ 10 (4.6%) were passengers

**Motorcycle Helmet Use in Crashes**

The table below shows the injury severity of motorcycle riders (driver or passenger) by helmet usage.

	Fatalities	Injuries	Not Injured	Total Motorcyclists
Wear Helmets	107 (49.3%)	1,734 (55.1%)	208 (52.9%)	2,049 (54.5%)
No Helmets	103 (47.5%)	1,264 (40.2%)	130 (33.1%)	1,497 (39.8%)
Unknown	7 (3.2%)	150 (4.8%)	55 (14.0%)	212 (5.6%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>217 (100.0%)</b>	<b>3,148 (100.0%)</b>	<b>393 (100.0%)</b>	<b>3,758 (100.0%)</b>

Out of almost 405,000 registered motorcycles and riders there were 217 deaths in 2022.

Split almost evenly between un-helmeted and helmeted riders – however as you can clearly see,

Helmeted riders had more deaths and injuries recorded. Hmmmmm .....makes you wonder why?

This clearly shows that helmeted riders sustained more injuries and actually had more accidents. Why you may ask? Helmets actually block peripheral vision and hearing, thus preventing the rider/operator from acting to keep themselves safe.

Additionally; when the helmet law was reinstated in 1992, after erroneous, illegal, misguided threats, from the feds stating to states that they would be withholding funds unless they adopted an across the board helmet bill, the state was supposed to provide a list of approved helmets which it NEVER has.

I could provide many more Factual stats and am willing to do so should you wish to have more solid knowledge than what the medical minions fabricate to provide you.

In closing.

Helmets DO NOT PREVENT ACCIDENTS. EDUCATION DOES. USING YOUR BRAIN DOES. PEOPLE NOT DRIVING DISTRACTED DOES.

After stating this, I urge you to vote favorably for SB0503. Please allow us to make the choices that will guide our lives. Please also convince the delegates in the house to vote favorably so we can make Pappy's (and countless others) years of hard work count for something. Get rid of this helmet mandate and allow your voting constituents the right to govern and author their own lives. We are not asking for the revocation of a persons' right to choose. We are not demanding a permanent ban on helmets! All we are asking for is the ability to exercise our rights as over 21-year-old, free thinking, tax paying and voting motorcyclists to make our choices of whether we want to wear helmets or not.

Thank You,

Respectfully

Shelli McLane

[Shelli30gscout@yahoo.com](mailto:Shelli30gscout@yahoo.com)

443-740-1901

1826 Dennings Rd.

New Windsor, Md. 21776

2/21/2024

# **Motorcycle-Crashes-and-Helmet-Use\_2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: michelle mclane

Position: FAV



UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

SHOCK, TRAUMA AND ANESTHESIOLOGY  
RESEARCH CENTER

National Study Center for Trauma & Emergency Medical Services

# MOTORCYCLE CRASHES AND HELMET USE

*Prepared By:*

*National Study Center for Trauma and EMS*

University of Maryland School of Medicine

Shock, Trauma and Anesthesiology Research Center

February 2023



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Number of Motorcycle Crashes (Benchmarks)	1,748	1,551	1,613	1,481	1,517	1,451	1,274	1,253	1,289	1,343
Number of motorcyclist fatalities (Driver Specific Benchmarks)	75	61	66	70	72	82	57	75	78	76
Number of unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities (Maryland Crash Data)	15	9	12	9	8	17	9	7	6	15
Percent of fatalities that were unhelmeted	20.0%	14.8%	18.2%	12.9%	11.1%	20.7%	15.8%	9.3%	7.7%	19.7%

**5-Year Average**

15.41%  
2012-2016

14.67%  
2017-2021

**Motorcycle Involved  
By Jurisdiction**

<b>County</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>5 Year Total</b>	<b>5 Year Avg.</b>	<b>5 Year %</b>
Allegany	8	18	13	16	21	76	15.2	1.1
Anne Arundel	162	140	129	137	135	703	140.6	10.6
Baltimore	180	212	179	182	191	944	188.8	14.3
Calvert	25	21	19	23	21	109	21.8	1.6
Caroline	4	3	7	6	3	23	4.6	0.3
Carroll	37	31	45	36	27	176	35.2	2.7
Cecil	46	46	39	46	39	216	43.2	3.3
Charles	37	50	53	50	50	240	48	3.6
Dorchester	8	6	12	7	9	42	8.4	0.6
Frederick	86	61	67	78	75	367	73.4	5.6
Garrett	19	10	9	13	7	58	11.6	0.9
Harford	79	46	53	51	73	302	60.4	4.6
Howard	63	41	44	37	48	233	46.6	3.5
Kent	2	1	3	3	2	11	2.2	0.2
Montgomery	140	124	135	99	109	607	121.4	9.2
Prince George's	217	168	170	201	202	958	191.6	14.5
Queen Anne's	19	14	11	13	13	70	14	1.1
St. Mary's	27	37	33	26	47	170	34	2.6
Somerset	9	4	4	2	5	24	4.8	0.4
Talbot	10	11	4	2	9	36	7.2	0.5
Washington	56	51	46	61	52	266	53.2	4.0
Wicomico	32	31	44	29	42	178	35.6	2.7
Worcester	29	26	38	31	32	156	31.2	2.4
Baltimore City	156	122	96	140	131	645	129	9.8
<b>Total Crashes</b>	<b>1,451</b>	<b>1,274</b>	<b>1,253</b>	<b>1,289</b>	<b>1,343</b>	<b>6610</b>	<b>1322</b>	<b>100</b>

**Motorcycle Involved  
Driver Gender**

<b>Driver Gender</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>5 Year Total</b>	<b>5 Year Avg.</b>	<b>5 Year %</b>
<b>Male</b>	1,304	1,136	1,132	1,152	1,217	5,941	1,188	87.0
<b>Female</b>	98	69	77	78	70	392	78	5.7
<b>Unknown</b>	93	101	95	110	95	494	99	7.2
<b>Total Drivers</b>	1,495	1,306	1,304	1,340	1,382	6,827	1,365	100

**Motorcycle Involved  
Passenger Gender**

<b>Passenger Gender</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>5 Year Total</b>	<b>5 Year Avg.</b>	<b>5 Year %</b>
<b>Male</b>	8	17	10	17	11	63	13	13.4
<b>Female</b>	87	69	97	76	77	406	81	86.2
<b>Unknown</b>	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0.4
<b>Total Passengers</b>	95	86	107	94	89	471	94	100

**Motorcycle drivers only.**

**Motorcycle Involved  
Driver Age**

<b>Driver Age</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>5 Year Total</b>	<b>5 Year Avg.</b>	<b>5 Year %</b>
<b>15 and Under</b>	5	5	9	10	11	40	8	0.6
<b>16</b>	2	4	3	2	7	18	4	0.3
<b>17</b>	8	10	4	8	10	40	8	0.6
<b>18</b>	17	14	15	7	10	63	13	0.9
<b>19</b>	20	20	25	22	19	106	21	1.6
<b>20</b>	35	28	20	32	23	138	28	2.0
<b>21 - 24</b>	170	137	135	137	126	705	141	10.3
<b>25 - 29</b>	211	164	161	191	177	904	181	13.2
<b>30 - 34</b>	149	137	128	155	173	742	148	10.9
<b>35 - 39</b>	126	106	121	134	163	650	130	9.5
<b>40 - 44</b>	118	74	87	92	104	475	95	7.0
<b>45 - 49</b>	138	111	104	90	102	545	109	8.0
<b>50 - 54</b>	137	116	145	98	111	607	121	8.9
<b>55 - 59</b>	111	124	116	108	108	567	113	8.3
<b>60 - 64</b>	75	86	70	65	69	365	73	5.3
<b>65 - 69</b>	51	42	40	47	50	230	46	3.4
<b>70 - 79</b>	24	32	27	23	24	130	26	1.9
<b>80 +</b>	5	1	4	6	1	17	3	0.2
<b>Unknown</b>	93	95	90	113	94	485	97	7.1
<b>Total Drivers</b>	1,495	1,306	1,304	1,340	1,382	6,827	1,365	100

**Motorcycle Involved  
Passenger Age**

<b>Passenger Age</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>5 Year Total</b>	<b>5 Year Avg.</b>	<b>5 Year %</b>
<b>Under 5</b>	1	1	0	2	1	5	1	1.1
<b>5 - 9</b>	0	3	1	3	1	8	2	1.7
<b>10 - 11</b>	1	1	5	0	4	11	2	2.3
<b>12 - 13</b>	0	1	0	2	2	5	1	1.1
<b>14 - 15</b>	0	1	2	0	0	3	1	0.6
<b>16 - 17</b>	1	2	3	2	2	10	2	2.1
<b>18 - 19</b>	2	3	5	1	3	14	3	3.0
<b>20 - 24</b>	9	9	12	11	9	50	10	10.6
<b>25 - 29</b>	10	10	12	8	4	44	9	9.3
<b>30 - 34</b>	4	7	10	15	9	45	9	9.6
<b>35 - 39</b>	5	7	3	11	14	40	8	8.5
<b>40 - 44</b>	13	2	5	7	9	36	7	7.6
<b>45 - 49</b>	14	12	10	5	8	49	10	10.4
<b>50 - 54</b>	15	9	16	12	7	59	12	12.5
<b>55 - 59</b>	10	12	12	7	8	49	10	10.4
<b>60 - 64</b>	6	5	4	6	5	26	5	5.5
<b>65 - 69</b>	3	0	6	0	1	10	2	2.1
<b>70 - 79</b>	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	0.6
<b>80 +</b>	1	1	1	1	0	4	1	0.8
<b>Unknown</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
<b>Total Passengers</b>	95	86	107	94	89	471	94	100

# Testimony for SB503.pdf

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV

**MIKE MCKAY**  
*Legislative District 1*  
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



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Mike.McKay@senate.state.md.us

Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Executive Nominations Committee

**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

Senate Bill 503 – Vehicle Laws – Protective Headgear Requirement for Motorcycle Rides – Exception (In Remembrance of Gary “Pappy” Boward)

February 18, 2024

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 503 exempts individuals from the requirement of wearing helmets or other protective headgear if they meet any of three criteria. They must be an individual 21 years of age or older and either: have been licensed to drive a motorcycle for two years, completed a motorcycle safety course that has been approved by the State of Maryland, or is a passenger on a motorcycle being driven by an individual already meeting the previously mentioned criteria.

The AMA (American Motorcyclists Association) and ABATE of Maryland, Inc fully support this piece of legislation. Mandatory helmet laws do not prevent crashes as much as we wish them to. A helmet alone is not sufficient to prevent injuries. Other measures such as better education to improve the skills of motorcyclists reduce accidents much more than just safety equipment. I do believe that as adults we can make proper safety decisions.

In Pennsylvania, there is Freedom of Choice law regarding helmet usage. Of the 372,000 registered motorcyclists, 2021 saw just 3,580 total motorcycle crashes. That is exactly .96% of registered motorcycles. In contrast Mississippi, is a mandatory helmet state and they have the highest death rate of

motorcyclists in the country with 12 per 10,000. This only shows that it does not matter whether safety is legislated or not, but whether personal responsibility is taken.

Thank you very much and I ask for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Senator Mike McKay

Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland

Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties





**SB \_\_\_\_\_JBahouth\_unf\_2024.pdf**

Uploaded by: Janet Bahouth

Position: UNF



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Columbia, Maryland 21046  
410 733 7794   
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**UNF, In Opposition, to**

**Senate Bill 0503 Maryland General Assembly  
February 22, 2024**

**Statement of Janet Bahouth, D.Sc.  
Injury Biomechanics and Transportation Safety Engineering, Impact Research**

My name is Dr. Janet Bahouth. I am a co-owner of Impact Research – a transportation safety research and engineering firm in Columbia, Maryland. Impact Research is crash data analysis and transportation safety research that informs decisions about motor vehicle safety, roadway and traffic safety, and occupant protection. I hold a Doctor of Science degree in Transportation Safety Engineering and I am clinically trained in injury biomechanics.

As background, please refer to 2021 Maryland Statutes Transportation Title 8 – Highways Subtitle 10 - Vision Zero Section 8-1003 designating Maryland as a “Vision Zero” state where a program must exist to plan and develop a state highway roadway system that has zero vehicle-related deaths and serious injuries by 2030. Repealing Maryland’s helmet law would be inconsistent with the state’s Vision Zero mandate.

In the U.S., motorcycle traffic fatalities continue to be overrepresented, accounting for 14 percent of all traffic-related fatalities, while representing only 3 percent of the entire registered motor vehicle fleet. Based on this data, and other state’s experience, repealing this law that saves lives would cause unintended consequence of harm.

With the Maryland Department of Transportation’s Highway Safety Office and the Maryland State Police Motor Unit, I’ve directed research of Maryland motorcycle crashes that were fatal or caused serious injury to the rider. This was a comprehensive look at the circumstances from pre-crash, during the crash itself, and post-crash. The goal of the research aligns with ABATE’s principal that risks can be mitigated through rider and driver education. Our goal was to identify those motorcycle safety concepts that, as evidenced by these riders’ fatal and serious injury outcomes, need more focus and attention in rider and driver education so that the outcome of these crashes could be different. As A.B.A.T.E’s principal states, and as our team of experts proved, Maryland riders would certainly benefit from this kind of education. Understanding these concepts could protect a rider, but none of them mean anything without the proper gear, including a helmet. We can all agree that when a crash occurs, knowledge isn’t going to protect anything.

A typical crash lasts 350 milliseconds. That’s 1/3 of a second and is faster than the blink of an eye. The forces sustained during only a fraction of a second either ends a life, drastically changes it, or isn’t enough to compromise the body due to safeguards – like seat belts, airbags, or helmets.

These safe guards actually limit the force that is inflicted on a body. The more force absorbed by the safeguard, the better your chances of walking away. That's the physics we can't ignore.

I agree with some principals held by the supporters of this bill. I can understand the love of riding – the sense of freedom, relishing the fresh air, and the associated cool factor. But ask any rider, and if they're being honest, they'll tell you it's not a matter of IF they crash, but WHEN. The supporters of this bill have implied that no one but the rider gets hurt. But in truth, it's the taxpayers' economy and societal costs that are hurt when we foot the 12 million dollar bill for each death on our roads.

In conclusion, by changing the all-rider helmet law, you are knowingly facilitating a rise in deaths and are in contradiction with Maryland's Vision Zero law (2021 Maryland Statutes Transportation Title 8 – Highways Subtitle 10 - Vision Zero Section 8-1003). I urge you to oppose Senate Bill 503.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet Bahouth". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Dr. Janet Bahouth

**SB 503 - JPR- MDH- Opp.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jason Caplan

Position: UNF



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 22, 2024

The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.  
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East Miller, Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

### **RE: Senate Bill 503 - Vehicle Laws-Protective Headgear Requirement-Exception (In Remembrance of Gary “Pappy” Boward) – Oppose**

Dear Chair Smith and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully opposes Senate Bill (SB) 503 - “Vehicle Laws- Protective Headgear Requirement- Exception (In Remembrance of Gary “Pappy” Boward)”. SB 503 would exempt an individual from wearing protective headgear when operating a motorcycle if the individual is at least 21 years old and (1) licensed to operate a motorcycle for at least two years, (2) has completed an approved motorcycle rider safety course, or (3) is a passenger on a motorcycle operated by a rider exempt under (1) or (2).

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that protective headgear such as helmets saved the lives of 1,872 motorcyclists in 2017.<sup>1</sup> In Maryland alone, helmets saved an estimated 43 lives in 2017.<sup>1</sup> According to NHTSA’s National Center for Statistics and Analysis, protective headgear is approximately 37% effective in preventing fatalities to motorcyclists.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, motorcycle helmet use can reduce the risk of traumatic brain injury (TBI) up to 69%.<sup>3</sup>

A universal helmet law is by far the most effective method for preventing motorcyclist injuries and fatalities.<sup>4</sup> According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “On average states with universal helmet laws save eight times more lives per 100,000 motorcycle registrations each year compared to states without a helmet law and save three times more lives per 100,000 motorcycle registrations each year compared to states with a partial helmet law,”<sup>5</sup> requiring only specific groups to wear helmets. In 2020, NHTSA reported that there were 5.2 times as many motorcyclist fatalities in states without a universal helmet law compared to states with universal helmet laws.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the human toll taken in deaths and injuries, motorcycle crashes carry a sizable financial cost to society. The CDC reported that in 2020, national medical costs from motorcycle-related fatalities totaled \$81 million, while medical costs from nonfatal injuries totaled \$6.44 billion.<sup>7</sup> According to CDC, motorcycle fatalities cost Maryland \$106 million in 2018 (14% of the total cost for all motor vehicle crashes).<sup>8</sup>

Maryland's universal motorcycle helmet law is an effective public health strategy aimed at significantly reducing motorcycle-related injuries and fatalities. Rolling back the law with exemptions will result in increased serious injuries and deaths along with increased economic costs.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at [sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov](mailto:sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,



Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2019). Lives saved in 2017 by restraint use and minimum-drinking-age laws (Traffic Safety Facts Crash\*Stats. Report No. DOT HS 812 683). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812683>

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2019). Lives and costs saved by motorcycle helmets, 2017. Traffic Safety Facts Crash\*Stats (Report No. DOT HS 812 867). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812867>

<sup>3</sup> Liu BC, Ivers R, Norton R, Boufous S, Blows S, Lo SK, Helmets for preventing injury in motorcycle riders (Review), The Cochrane Library, Issue 1, 2009. Available online at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD004333.pub3/abstract>

<sup>4</sup> Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). *Motorcycle safety: How to save lives and save money*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (U.S.). Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S.). <http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/pdf/mc2012/MotorcycleSafetyBook.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Governor Highway Safety Association. (2018). *Motorcyclist Traffic fatalities by state: 2017 preliminary data*. Washington, DC: Governors Highway Safety Association

<sup>6</sup> National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (May, 2022). *Motorcycles: 2020 data* (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 813 306). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

<sup>7</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [online]. (2005) {cited 2023 Feb 21}. Available from: [www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars)

<sup>8</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *Motor Vehicle Crash Deaths: Costly But Preventable*. Maryland. [https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/pdf/statecosts/2020/CDC-Cost-of-Crash-Deaths-Fact-Sheets\\_Maryland.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/pdf/statecosts/2020/CDC-Cost-of-Crash-Deaths-Fact-Sheets_Maryland.pdf)

# **2024-02-22- MD - Motorcycle helmet repeal - SB 724**

Uploaded by: Leah Walton

Position: UNF



*Testimony of*

Leah Walton  
Safety Advocacy Division  
National Transportation Safety Board

*Before the*

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Maryland General Assembly

*— On —*

Senate Bill 503

Vehicle Laws – Protective Headgear Requirement – Exception

Annapolis, MD • February 22, 2024



*An Independent Federal Agency*



Good afternoon Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to for the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to testify before you today.

The NTSB is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating aviation, marine, and rail accidents, commercial space launch and re-entry mishaps, highway crashes, and hazardous materials releases, in pipelines and elsewhere in transportation.

We determine their probable causes and issue safety recommendations to prevent them from happening again. We also conduct safety research.

The NTSB has no power to regulate or legislate, and we rely on the persuasive power of our comprehensive investigations and research to encourage the recipients of our recommendations to act to improve safety. We have recommended for many years that states adopt and maintain strong laws requiring all motorcycle riders to wear helmets meeting federal standards. Thus, we are very concerned about SB 503, as it would allow most motorcycle operators who are 21 or older to operate a motorcycle without protective headgear.

The growing number of Americans who have been killed or injured in motorcycle crashes is extremely troubling and makes it clear now is not the time to change the current law. In 2021, the number of motorcyclists killed in crashes increased by 8 percent from 2020.<sup>1</sup> Although motorcycles represent only 3.5 percent of the registered vehicles on our roads, motorcyclists account for 14 percent of all highway deaths. In Maryland, 81 motorcyclists lost their lives in 2023, which was over 13% of all crash-related fatalities.<sup>2</sup>

Head injury is a leading cause of death and disability in motorcycle crashes. A US Department of Transportation (DOT) report published in 2004 stated that helmets are 37 percent effective at preventing fatalities in motorcycle crashes.<sup>3</sup> According to a study conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the use of a safety helmet that complies with US Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 218 is the “single critical factor in the prevention [and] reduction of head injury.”<sup>4</sup> In the event of a crash, helmets are highly effective at preventing brain injuries, which often require extensive treatment and may result in lifelong disability. Unhelmeted motorcyclists are 3 times more likely than helmeted riders to suffer traumatic brain injuries in a crash.

According to NHTSA, helmet use continues to be significantly higher in states that require all motorcyclists to be helmeted. In 2021, 86.1 percent of motorcyclists observed in states with universal helmet laws were wearing DOT-compliant helmets. In states without such laws, helmet use was just 53.4 percent.<sup>5</sup> NHTSA estimates that helmets saved an estimated 1,872

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<sup>1</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Center for Statistics and Analysis. June 2023. *Motorcycles: 2021 Data*. Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS-813-466. Washington, DC: NHTSA.

<sup>2</sup> Zero Deaths Maryland, Fatal Crash Dashboard:

[https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/crashdashboard/?utm\\_medium=print&utm\\_source=asset&utm\\_campaign=data%20dashboard&utm\\_content=banner](https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/crashdashboard/?utm_medium=print&utm_source=asset&utm_campaign=data%20dashboard&utm_content=banner)

<sup>3</sup> Deutermann W. 2004. *Motorcycle Helmet Effectiveness Revisited*. Report No. DOT HS-809-715. Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

<sup>4</sup> Hurt HH, Ouellet JV, and Thom DR. (1981). *Motorcycle Accident Cause Factors and Identification of Countermeasures Volume I: Technical Report*. Los Angeles, CA: Traffic Safety Center, University of Southern California. NHTSA Contract No. DOT HS-5-01160.

<sup>5</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Center for Statistics and Analysis. March 2022. *Motorcycle Helmet Use in 2021—Overall Results*. Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 813 270. Washington, DC: NHTSA.

motorcyclists' lives in 2017, and an additional 749 lives could have been saved if all motorcyclists wore helmets.<sup>6</sup> In states without universal helmet laws, 57 percent of motorcyclists killed in 2020 were not wearing helmets, as compared to 11 percent in states with universal helmet laws.<sup>7</sup>

When universal helmet laws are weakened, helmet use rates decrease dramatically, and motorcycle deaths and injuries increase markedly, even when accounting for changes in ridership that may be associated with weakening the law. For example, Michigan weakened its helmet law in 2012 and the percentage of motorcyclists not wearing helmets quadrupled the year after the repeal. A study conducted 3 years after the repeal found increases in crash scene fatalities, greater injury severities, worse neurologic injury, and heightened hospital mortality among nonhelmeted riders involved in crashes.<sup>8</sup> SB 503 exempts all motorcycle riders over the age of 21 who have been licensed to operate a motorcycle for two years or who have completed a motorcycle safety course from wearing a helmet, which not only leaves a significant portion of Maryland's motorcycle-riding population unprotected, but is also unenforceable. This is simply not good public safety policy.

The remarkable effectiveness of universal helmet laws in preventing death and disability among motorcyclists is a powerful argument for retaining such laws. Additionally, universal helmet laws are part of a safe system. A Safe System approach addresses all aspects of traffic safety: road users, vehicles, speeds, roads, and postcrash care and follows the core belief that even one roadway death or serious injury is too many. Which is why individual road users are included, and who must make safe choices every time they walk, run, bike, drive, or roll. For more than 70 years, research has shown that helmets protect motorcyclists and passengers from death and serious injury. I hope that, as the Judicial Proceedings Committee hears SB 503, you will consider these decades of research and the indisputable evidence that helmets—and helmet laws—save lives and reject this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of Maryland's existing universal motorcycle helmet requirement. We would be happy to provide additional information in response to any questions that the committee might have.

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<sup>6</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Center for Statistics and Analysis. December 2019. *Lives and Costs Saved by Motorcycle Helmets, 2017*. Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 812 867. Washington, DC: NHTSA.

<sup>7</sup> NHTSA. *Motorcycle Helmet Use in 2021—Overall Results*.

<sup>8</sup> Striker RH, Chapman AJ, Titus RA, Davis AT, and Rodriguez CH. 2016. Repeal of the Michigan helmet law: the evolving clinical impact. *The American Journal of Surgery*. 211(3):529–533.

# **MD State Council Emergency Nurses Assoc Lisa Tenne**

Uploaded by: Lisa Tenney

Position: UNF



EMERGENCY NURSES  
ASSOCIATION

Maryland State Council  
Safe Practice Safe Care

To: Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee  
Housse Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Date: February 22, 2024

Re: **SB 503 Vehicle Laws – Protective Headgear Requirement – Exception (In Remembrance of Gary “Pappy” Boward)**  
UNFAVORABLE oral testimony

Good day Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, Committee members,

My name is Lisa Tenney, and I am testifying on behalf of The Maryland Emergency Nurses Association in OPPOSITION to **SB 503 Vehicle Laws – Protective Headgear Requirement – Exception** (In Remembrance of Gary “Pappy” Boward).

The Maryland Emergency Nurses Association submitted a joint unfavorable written testimony to the Committee along with Advocates for Auto and Highway Safety and SMARTER (Skilled Motorcyclist Association - Responsible, Trained and Educated Riders, Inc.) Upon further examination of this proposed bill to repeal Maryland’s highly effective ALL MOTORCYCLE RIDERS requirement to wear a helmet, here are more thoughts.

For the motorcyclist, this is an “emotional” issue. As Americans, they want their “freedom” to choose not to wear a helmet so that they can “feel the wind blow through their hair” to enhance their riding experiences. They want to be able to choose this momentary joy and choose to take the risk that they may very well cause their own death, or a long term injury, or unspeakable pain to their families, or possibly become a burden to the Maryland taxpayers, should they need long term care from a traumatic brain injury.

This is also an “emotional” issue for emergency nurses. Not because it is difficult to physically care for trauma victims - it is a privilege for us to use our skills and expertise to care for any trauma victim. The emotional part for emergency nurses is caring for the patients’ loved ones when they arrive to see their husband, father, son, or daughter who has either been killed or maimed in a motorcycle crash. It is especially hard when a traumatic brain injury could have been prevented had the motorcyclist only worn a helmet. These families are devastated and brokenhearted as they face their forever-changed lives. We do not have answers for them when they ask, “Why wasn’t he wearing his helmet?” This is OUR emotional issue.

Of the many hats emergency nurses wear, the easiest one is to advocate for injury prevention and zero vehicle related deaths. We would prefer that taxpayer money be spent preventing injuries rather than caring for patients with traumatic brain injuries. This is our emotional reason for being here before you today: to advocate for the prevention of morbidity (death) and mortality (injury).

Please stay the course on requiring helmets for all motorcyclists in Maryland. Please prioritize public safety above emotion. Maryland's emergency nurses thank you in advance for an UNfavorable bipartisan review of HB 639.

Respectfully,

Lisa Tenney

Lisa Tenney BSN, RN, CEN, CPHRM, FAEN  
Chair, Government Affairs  
Maryland Emergency Nurses Association  
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# **SB 503 - Veh Laws - Protect Headgear Req - SEN JPR**

Uploaded by: Matthew Levy

Position: UNF



**2024 SESSION**

**SENATE BILL 503**

*Vehicle Laws – Protective Headgear Requirement for Motorcycle Riders – Exception (In Remembrance of Gary “Pappy” Broward)*

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE**

**SENATE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE**

*Matthew D. Levy, MD, MPH, F.A.A.P, Health Officer, Prince George’s County Health Department*

**For the Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO)**

*Position: Oppose – February 22, 2024*

The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) **strongly opposes SB 503**. It is regressive and, if passed, will take us back to 1979, when the helmet law was repealed. Because of the repeal, deaths and injuries climbed, leading to reinstatement of the law in 1992. *This is one instance when maintaining the status quo is best for Maryland.*

Public health policies are steeped in science and data. The data from health and traffic safety experts in this area is **irrefutable**. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC)’s research has demonstrated that **helmets:**

- **reduce the risk of death by 37% and the risk of head injury by 69%**
- **do not reduce visibility or impair hearing**
- **save more than \$1 billion if all motorcyclists wore helmets**, each year in the U.S.

The **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** estimates that **protective headgear saved the lives of 1,872 motorcyclists in 2017**. If all motorcyclists had worn helmets, an additional 749 lives could have been saved, and in Maryland, helmets have **saved an additional 43 lives** in 2017. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812683>

**Maryland’s helmet law must remain a universal law, not a partial law.** There is strong, substantial, and clear evidence that universal helmet laws save lives, prevent injury, and save money. This is not true for partial laws. Nationally, riders 30 years and older account for over 70% of all motorcycle fatalities. More riders over the age of 50 died in 2019 than riders under the age of 30. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813112>

**Non-helmeted riders injured in a crash have substantially higher healthcare costs than helmeted riders.** When a rider is insured, these costs are passed on to others in the form of higher health insurance premiums. When the rider is uninsured, medical expenses may be paid for using taxpayers’ funds. According to the CDC, in 2013 motorcycle fatalities cost Maryland \$96M. **In 2017, motorcycle helmet use saved MD nearly \$100M in direct economic costs and over \$590M in comprehensive costs (economic plus valuation for lost quality of life).** If every motorcyclist had worn a helmet, comprehensive costs savings would have been an additional \$65M.

<https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/Publication/812867>

Helmets are an effective, low cost and non-intrusive way to prevent death and catastrophic injuries that affect many in our communities. When a non-helmeted motorcycle rider crashes and is injured, many are impacted and traumatized – not just the individual. This includes the families who now must care for their

SB 503  
SENATE JPR  
MACHO Oppose  
M. Levy  
Page 2

loved one or say goodbye, the EMTs who arrive on the scene, the nurses and doctors who treat and rehabilitate the patient; the employer who lost a good worker, the insurer who is paying the bills, and society who has lost a valuable member.

Maryland has a long history of supporting public health and public safety. This is accomplished by data-driven decision-making backed by science, facts, and subject matter experts. Some of the greatest improvements in health and life expectancy over the last 100+ years are due to the very measures enacted on behalf of public health.

Maryland has many public health laws and regulations to ensure safety while pursuing activities that are potentially dangerous and life-threatening. These include seatbelt laws, life vest laws, hunter wearing orange/pink laws, car seat laws, cell phone laws, and speeding laws. ***These laws are safety provisions that do not restrict the ability of an individual to participate in the desired activity.*** Now is not the time to change what is working for our communities.

**MACHO opposes SB 503. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at [rmaiora1@jhu.edu](mailto:rmaiora1@jhu.edu) or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.***



**MD SB 503 HB 639 Oppose.pdf**

Uploaded by: Omar Masood

Position: UNF



ADVOCATES  
FOR HIGHWAY  
& AUTO SAFETY



**Statement of Omar Masood, Director of State Government Relations, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety;**

**Lisa Tenney, BSN, RN, CEN, CPHRM, FAEN, Chair, Government Affairs, Maryland State Council  
Emergency Nurses Association;**

**Dan Petterson, Ed. D., President, Skilled Motorcyclist Association - Responsible, Trained and Educated  
Riders, Inc. (SMARTER)**

**UNFAVORABLE: In Opposition to Senate Bill 503/ House Bill 639**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**Maryland General Assembly**

**February 22, 2024**

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates) is an alliance of consumer, safety, medical, public health and law enforcement groups and insurance companies working together to pass highway and auto safety laws that prevent crashes, save lives, reduce injuries, and contain costs. The Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) is the premier professional nursing association dedicated to defining the future of emergency nursing through advocacy, education, research, innovation, and leadership. The Skilled Motorcyclist Association - Responsible, Trained and Educated Riders, Inc. (SMARTER) is a non-profit association of riders who support all-rider helmet laws. Our organizations thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony jointly in opposition to Senate Bill (SB) 503/ House Bill (HB) 639, legislation that would repeal Maryland's all-rider motorcycle helmet law. This critical safety law has been preventing deaths and injuries and saving taxpayer dollars in Maryland for nearly 32 years. To repeal the all-rider motorcycle helmet law would be a deadly and costly mistake.

**Motor Vehicle Crash Fatalities are Exceedingly High, Including Riders of Motorcycles, the Most Hazardous Form of Motor Vehicle Transportation.<sup>i</sup>**

In 2021, 5,932 motorcyclists were killed in the U.S., the highest number of fatalities on record.<sup>ii</sup> Early estimates for 2022 indicate "total projected motorcyclist fatalities increased by 5 percent."<sup>iii</sup> Motorcycle riders are nearly 28 times more likely to die in a crash than passenger vehicle occupants.<sup>iv</sup> Data show that dangerous driving behaviors, including speeding, alcohol-impairment and driver distraction, continue to contribute to deadly outcomes, especially for vulnerable road users (VRU), including motorcycle riders, who lack the protective structure of a passenger vehicle.

Traffic safety is a serious issue that requires improvement rather than the dismantling of the state's all-rider motorcycle helmet law, a proven traffic safety countermeasure. Over the five-year period of 2018 to 2022, an average of 73 fatal crashes and 935 injury crashes involving a motorcycle occurred each year in Maryland. On Maryland roadways, 75 motorcyclists lost their lives in 2022 while crash impacts on motorcycle riders exceeded the five-year average in both fatalities and injuries.<sup>v</sup> Overall traffic fatalities in the state rose 10 percent between 2012-2021.<sup>vi</sup>

**Motorcycle Helmet Use, Bolstered by All-Rider Laws, is a Proven Lifesaver.**

Motorcycle helmets are proven lifesavers and injury preventers. According to a report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), laws requiring all motorcyclists to wear helmets are the only strategy proven to be effective in reducing motorcyclist fatalities.<sup>vii</sup> After Maryland enacted its all-rider motorcycle helmet law in 1992, the motorcyclist death rate (per 10,000 registered motorcycles) from crashes dropped 56 percent over a five-year period.<sup>viii</sup>

State laws requiring all riders to wear helmets are extremely effective in achieving helmet use. Data released from NHTSA show that in states with all-rider helmet laws, use of helmets compliant with federal standards is 86 percent, compared to just 53 percent in states without such a law.<sup>ix</sup> According to NHTSA, in 2021, there were 9.6 times as many unhelmeted fatalities (2,038 fatalities) in states without a universal helmet law compared to states with a universal helmet law (213 fatalities).<sup>x</sup> These states were similar with respect to total resident populations.<sup>xi</sup> The data

are clear – Maryland’s all-rider helmet requirement is working to ensure motorcycle helmet use and the safety of motorcycle riders.

### **Motor Vehicle Crashes, Especially Involving Motorcycles, are Costly to All Marylanders. Helmet Use Reduces Preventable Expenditures.**

Traffic crashes impose a physical, emotional, and financial toll on Maryland families. In 2019, the cost of crashes in Maryland surpassed \$5.9 billion – essentially resulting in a “crash tax” on each Marylander of \$977.<sup>xii</sup>

Annually, motorcycle crashes cost nearly \$17 billion in economic impacts and \$107 billion in societal harm as measured by comprehensive costs based on 2019 data.<sup>xiii</sup> Serious injuries and fatalities accounted for 83 percent of total comprehensive costs of motorcycle crashes, compared to 60 percent of the total comprehensive costs of all motor vehicle crashes.<sup>xiv</sup> Traumatic brain injury is a serious, potentially life-long injury that can result from a motorcycle crash, especially when the rider is not wearing a helmet. In addition to changes in social, cognitive and physical ability, costs for lifetime care for a traumatic brain injury can easily amount to millions of dollars.

Conversely, in 2019, motorcycle helmets prevented \$21.2 billion in societal harm costs, but another \$9.4 billion could have been prevented if all motorcycle riders had worn helmets.<sup>xv</sup> Helmet use reduces the cost of medical treatment, length of hospital stay and probability of long-term disability for those riders injured in crashes. The provisions in SB 503/HB 639 to ostensibly alleviate the risks posed by riders and their passengers riding without a helmet, specifying the exception is for those age 21 and older, mandating two years riding experience and passing a safety course, fail to mitigate the severe and serious damages that will be caused by repealing the state’s all-rider motorcycle helmet law. Further, there is no scientific evidence that motorcycle rider training reduces crash risk and is an adequate substitute for an all-rider helmet law.

### **Motorcycle Helmet Law Repeals Have Resulted in Increased Deaths, Injuries and Associated Costs.**

Experience and data have proven that states which repeal an all-rider motorcycle helmet law always experience an increase in rider deaths, serious and disabling brain injuries, and medical costs usually borne by taxpayers and the state. In Michigan, which repealed its all-rider law in 2012, there would have been 26 fewer motorcycle crash deaths (a 21 percent reduction) if the helmet mandate was still in place that year, according to the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute.<sup>xvi</sup> Time has only exacerbated the problem as motorcycle deaths were 60 percent higher in 2021 compared to 2011.<sup>xvii xviii</sup> Missouri experienced similar results after repealing its all-rider helmet law. Helmetless motorcycle deaths increased a staggering 567 percent from 2019, the last year the all-rider law was in effect, to 2021, the first full year without the law.<sup>xix</sup>

Furthermore, “minors only” helmet laws, such as SB 503/HB 639 seeks to enact, are ineffective, unenforceable, and unpopular. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, in states with weak youth-specific helmet laws, use decreased, and youth mortality increased. Serious traumatic brain injury among youth was 38 percent higher in states with age-specific laws compared to states with all-rider helmet laws.<sup>xx</sup> After Florida repealed its all-rider helmet law in 2000, the fatality rate (per 10,000 registered motorcycles) jumped 21 percent. Deaths of riders under the age of 21 who were not helmeted increased 188 percent, even though the law still applied to them.<sup>xxi</sup> Enforcing laws for only young riders is problematic since it is very difficult, if not impossible in certain roadway environments, for law enforcement to estimate a rider’s age. It is also impossible to determine training or length of experience operating a motorcycle in such circumstances.

### **The Public is Concerned about Roadway Safety and Supports All-Rider Helmet Laws.**

A public opinion poll commissioned by Advocates found that overwhelming majorities of respondents were “extremely” or “very” concerned about dangerous driving behaviors and scenarios.<sup>xxii</sup> Two-thirds of poll respondents indicated that they do not think enough is being done to reduce dangerous behavior on our roadways.<sup>xxiii</sup> Further, the American public understands the need for all-rider helmet laws and overwhelmingly supports them as demonstrated by the American Automobile Association (AAA) Foundation Traffic Safety Culture Index, which found more than four in five Americans (82%) support a law requiring all motorcycle riders to wear a helmet.<sup>xxiv</sup> Removing basic safety protections, including Maryland’s all-rider helmet law, runs contrary to public opinion.

If SB 503/HB 639 is passed, it will result in more deaths, injuries, and an increased financial burden on Maryland's emergency services and hospitals and ultimately, every Maryland taxpayer. **Advocates, ENA Maryland State Council, and SMARTER urge you to oppose SB 503/HB 639.** Thank you.

- <sup>i</sup> The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019 (Revised), NHTSA, Feb. 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>.
- <sup>ii</sup> Traffic Safety Facts: 2021 Data, Motorcycles, NHTSA, Jun. 2023 (Revised), DOT HS 813 466, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813466>.
- <sup>iii</sup> National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2022, December). Early estimates of motor vehicle traffic fatalities and fatality rate by sub-categories through June 2022 (Crash•Stats Brief Statistical Summary. Report No. DOT HS 813 405). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- <sup>iv</sup> Traffic Safety Facts. 2020 Data: Motorcycles, NHTSA, May 2022, DOT HS 813 306.
- <sup>v</sup> Crash Summary Report – Motorcycle Involved (2022), Maryland Department of Transportation available at: <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/>.
- <sup>vi</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>vii</sup> Motorcycle Safety: Increasing Federal Funding Flexibility and Identifying Research Priorities Would Help Support States' Safety Efforts, U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), November 2012, available at: <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-13-42>
- <sup>viii</sup> Autopsy Study of Motorcyclist Fatalities: The Effect of the 1992 Maryland Motorcycle Helmet Use Law, American Journal of Public Health 1352-1355, 92:8, August 2002.
- <sup>ix</sup> Traffic Safety Facts Research Note, Motorcycle Helmet Use in 2021 – Overall Results, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), March 2022, DOT HS 813 270, available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813270>
- <sup>x</sup> Traffic Safety Facts 2021 Data: Motorcycles, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration NHTSA, June 2023, DOT HS 813 466, available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813466>; 2020 Population and Housing State Data, US Census Bureau, August 2021, available at <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/2020-population-and-housing-state-data.html>
- <sup>xi</sup> Traffic Safety Facts. 2020 Data: Motorcycles, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), May 2022, DOT HS 813 306, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813306>; 2020 Population and Housing State Data, US Census Bureau, available at <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/2020-population-and-housing-state-data.html>
- <sup>xii</sup> The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019 (revised), The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), February 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403><sup>xiii</sup> The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019 (Revised), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), February 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>
- <sup>xiv</sup> The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019 (Revised), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), February 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>
- <sup>xv</sup> The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019 (Revised), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), February 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>
- <sup>xvi</sup> Analysis of Motorcycle Crashes: Comparison of 2012 to Previous Years, 18<sup>th</sup> Michigan Traffic Safety Summit, 2013.
- <sup>xvii</sup> NHSTA State Traffic Safety Information for Michigan, accessible at <https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm>.
- <sup>xviii</sup> "Michigan traffic deaths fall 5 percent in 2011". *New Haven Register*. (2012, April 20), available at: <https://www.nhregister.com/news/article/Michigan-traffic-deaths-fall-5-percent-in-2011-11520391.php>
- <sup>xix</sup> State Traffic Safety Information for Missouri (2021), NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm>.
- <sup>xx</sup> Youth Motorcycle-Related Brain Injury by State Helmet Law Type: United States 2005-2007, Pediatrics, Vol. 126, No. 6, 2010.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Traffic Safety Facts: Motorcycle Helmet Use Laws, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), January 2008, DOT HS 810 887W, available at: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/810887.pdf>
- <sup>xxii</sup> Public Concern About Roadway Safety, ENGINE's CARAVAN Survey, January 2022, available at: <https://saferoads.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Advocates-January-2022-Poll-Report-Final.pdf#page=4>
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Public Concern About Roadway Safety, ENGINE's CARAVAN Survey, January 2022, available at: <https://saferoads.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Advocates-January-2022-Poll-Report-Final.pdf#page=4>
- <sup>xxiv</sup> 2017 Traffic Safety Culture Index, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, March 2018, available at: <https://aaaafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/TSCI-2017-Report.pdf>

# **SB0503\_UNF\_MedChi\_Veh. Laws - Protective Headgear**

Uploaded by: Pam Kasemeyer

Position: UNF

# MedChi

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TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair  
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
The Honorable Mike McKay

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman  
Andrew G. Vetter  
Christine K. Krone  
410-244-7000

DATE: February 22, 2024

RE: **OPPOSE** – Senate Bill 503 – *Vehicle Laws – Protective Headgear Requirement – Exception (In Remembrance of Gary “Pappy” Boward)*

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The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi), the largest physician organization in Maryland, **opposes** Senate Bill 503.

Senate Bill 503 proposes to make certain exceptions to the current motorcycle helmet law provided an individual is at least 21 years old and has been licensed to operate a motorcycle for at least 2 years, has taken an approved motorcycle rider safety course, or is a passenger on a motorcycle operated by an individual who has been licensed for 2 years or has taken an approved safety course.

The opponents to Maryland’s motorcycle helmet requirements have tried to repeal the requirements for a number of years under different proposed exceptions, to no avail. Senate Bill 503 is clearly aimed at the same objective in a manner that appears to respond to concerns about rider safety.

There is no ambiguity in the data related to the benefits of mandatory helmet laws. In Maryland, the incidence of injury and death decreased dramatically following the passage of the current helmet requirements. No benefit can be gained by putting individuals at risk just because they may have been licensed for more than 2 years or have taken an approved safety course. For these reasons, we urge an unfavorable report.

# **SB0503 - MVA - Protective Headgear Requirement\_LOO**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: UNF

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February 22, 2024

The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.  
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Opposition – Senate Bill 503 – Vehicle Laws - Protective Headgear Requirement - Exception (In Remembrance of Gary "Pappy" Boward)***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) respectfully opposes Senate Bill 503 and offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 503 creates an exception to the motorcycle helmet requirement for individuals (or passengers) who are at least 21 years of age and who have either been licensed to operate a motorcycle for at least two years or have completed a motorcycle rider safety course approved by the Administrator of the MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) or the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

Currently, all motorcycle riders, including passengers, must wear motorcycle helmets that comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Standard (FMVSS) No. 218. The use of motorcycle helmets has proven effective in reducing serious head injuries among motorcyclists involved in crashes with no substantive adverse safety effects. Nevertheless, 14 percent of the 75 motorcycle riders and passengers who die on average each year on Maryland roadways were not wearing a helmet. Each year, on average 1,150 motorcycle riders and passengers are injured on Maryland roadways.

The Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) found that when a universal helmet law is repealed, helmet use drops substantially. The State of Michigan repealed its universal helmet law in 2012, and according to the Michigan State Police, annual fatalities from motorcycle-involved crashes saw an increase of 23 percent compared to pre-repeal. The GHSA urges states to oppose efforts to repeal universal motorcycle helmet laws and encourages states to adopt helmet use laws for all riders.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), helmet use is substantially lower in states that do not have a universal helmet law. In 2021, 96% of motorcyclists observed in states with universal helmet laws were wearing helmets. In states without such laws, helmet use was 57%. Use of helmets judged to be compliant with federal safety regulations was 86% among motorcyclists in states with universal helmet laws and 53% in states without such laws.



The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.  
Page Two

Currently, 17 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have universal helmet laws. Motorcycle licensure carries no requirements to gain experience or improve skills over time. A rider may obtain a motorcycle license and never again ride a motorcycle. Under the provisions of Senate Bill 503, a rider who has held a motorcycle license for two years but who has no further riding experience would be exempt from the helmet use requirement, as would anyone over the age of 21 taking the motorcycle safety course; and any passenger 21 years or older.

The Maryland MVA-approved motorcycle rider safety courses encourage the use of full protective riding gear by riders and passengers when operating and riding on a motorcycle. Senate Bill 503 permits a person to ride without a helmet simply because the rider has completed the approved rider safety course, regardless of how recently that safety training was completed.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests an unfavorable vote on Senate Bill 503.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer  
Administrator  
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration  
410-787-7830

Pilar Helm  
Director of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090

# **SB503 AAA Testimony in Opposition to Motorcycle He**

Uploaded by: Ragina Ali

Position: UNF



**AAA Mid-Atlantic's Testimony in OPPOSITION to SB 503**  
**Vehicle Laws - Protective Headgear Requirement for Motorcycle Rides - Exception**  
**(In Remembrance of Gary "Pappy" Boward)**  
***Sponsors: Senators McKay, Ready, Salling, Mautz, and Carter***

- AAA Mid-Atlantic **opposes SB 503**, which exempts an individual who is 21 years of age or older from wearing protective headgear, or a helmet, while operating or riding a motorcycle under certain circumstances.
- Motorcycle safety is trending in the wrong direction. As disheartening as the nationwide fatality trends are, the numbers for motorcyclists are even worse. In 2021, according to [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\) Fatality Analysis Reporting System \(FARS\)](#) data, more than 6,000 motorcyclists were killed across the country – the most since the federal government started keeping records in 1975.
- There are multiple reasons for this increase in fatalities, including drunk driving and speeding, but a decrease in helmet usage among motorcyclists contributed as well. After reaching a peak of 71% in 2018, the percentage of riders using helmets declined to 69% in 2020 and 65% in 2021, according to a NHTSA observational survey.
- According to the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS), Maryland's trauma centers treated 904 patients involved in motorcycle crashes during fiscal 2019. Ninety percent of these patients (812) were age 21 or older, and 28.4% of them (231) sustained a head injury, 26 of whom subsequently died. Of the 231 riders who sustained head injuries, 26 percent were not wearing a helmet.
- According to a [report on Motorcycle Crashes and Helmet Use](#), in 2021, there were 1,343 motorcycle crashes in Maryland, resulting in the deaths of 76 motorcyclists (*driver-specific*). Of those killed, 15 or nearly 20% were not wearing helmets. (*Source: University of Maryland School of Medicine, National Study Center for Trauma and Emergency Services*)
- AAA and traffic safety advocates across the country want to decrease the number of motorcycle-related injuries, and further reduce motorcyclist fatalities by supporting and strengthening laws that require helmet use, not repealing existing laws.
- Helmets are effective: According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, motorcycle helmets reduce the risk of death by 37-42%, and motorcyclists not wearing helmets are three times more likely than helmeted riders to suffer traumatic brain injuries.
- AAA **opposes** any legislation that will weaken existing traffic safety laws and put motorcyclists, bicyclists, motorists or pedestrians at a greater risk of injury or a traffic fatality; therefore, we oppose **SB 503** and respectfully urge the Committee to render an **unfavorable** report.

***Contacts:***

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