



AAA Mid-Atlantic's Testimony in OPPOSITION to SB 195
Vehicle Laws - Protective Headgear Requirement for Motorcycle Rides - Exception
(In Remembrance of Gary "Pappy" Boward)
Sponsor: Senator McKay

- AAA Mid-Atlantic **opposes SB 195 - Motorcycles - Protective Headgear Requirement - Exception (In Remembrance of Gary "Pappy" Boward)**, which would repeal Maryland's motorcycle helmet law. If passed, anyone who is 21 years of age or older would be exempted from wearing protective headgear, or a helmet, while operating or riding a motorcycle under certain circumstances.
- Motorcycle safety is trending in the wrong direction. In 2023, according to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, there were 6,335 motorcyclists killed across the country, representing 15% of all traffic fatalities and the highest number of motorcyclists killed since at least 1975.
- NHTSA data also showed that in states without universal helmet laws, 54% of motorcyclists killed in 2022 were not wearing helmets. In comparison, in states with universal helmet laws, 11% of motorcyclists who were killed were not wearing helmets.
- According to the [MDOT MVA's Highway Safety Office's most recent crash data](#), there were 1,350 motorcycle crashes in Maryland in 2023, resulting in 1,095 injured persons and 82 fatalities. (*As of January 26, 2026*).
- Helmets save lives and prevent injuries. Proponents say helmets are about the "freedom to choose," but as licensed drivers, taxpayers, insurance customers, medical consumers and families and friends left behind, we all pay the price for injuries and deaths that result when riders do not wear helmets.
- 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 195** and respectfully urge the Committee to render an **unfavorable** report.

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