



June 1, 2023

The Honorable Jim Pillen
Governor of Nebraska
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 94848
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4848

Dear Governor Pillen:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates) is an alliance of consumer, safety, law enforcement, medical and public health groups, and insurance companies and agents working to advance laws proven to prevent crashes, deaths and injuries on our roads and contain related costs. We urge you to veto Legislative Bill (LB) 138 which includes a provision to repeal Nebraska's all-rider motorcycle helmet law. This safety law has been saving lives, preventing serious lifelong injuries and keeping taxpayers' dollars in their wallets for more than three decades. Repealing it would be a deadly and costly mistake.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has concluded that "laws requiring all motorcyclists to wear helmets are the only strategy proven to be effective in reducing motorcyclist fatalities." In the event of a crash, helmet wearing reduces a motorcycle rider's risk of head injury by 69 percent and risk of death by 42 percent.ⁱ Moreover, the observed use rate of U.S. DOT-compliant helmets among motorcyclists is over 86 percent in states with all-rider helmet laws, compared to only 53 percent in states without such laws.ⁱⁱ Simply put, all-rider helmet laws save lives because they get motorcyclists to wear helmets.

Motorcycle rider crashes are not only deadly and damaging, they also are extremely expensive. In 2020, the most recent year for which data is available, the cost of motorcycle crashes in Nebraska was projected to surpass \$687 million.ⁱⁱⁱ A significant cause of this ballooning cost is the medical care of crash victims. Medical costs associated with caring for unhelmeted motorcyclists are significantly higher. A 2002 review of 25 studies of the costs of injuries from motorcycle crashes reported that helmet use reduced the cost of medical treatment, length of hospital stay and probability of long-term disability for motorcyclists injured in a crash.^{iv} In states with an all-rider helmet law, use of a helmet resulted in economic costs saved to society of \$725 per registered motorcycle, compared with \$198 per registered motorcycle in states without such a law.^v

The American public understands the importance of all-rider motorcycle helmet laws, and their support has been enduring and consistent. The American Automobile Association (AAA) Foundation Traffic Safety Culture Index found that more than 4 in 5 Americans (82%) support a law requiring all motorcyclists to wear a helmet.^{vi} These national results are consistent with beliefs in Nebraska. An October 2022 survey of 8,000 Nebraskans revealed that 81 percent support Nebraska's law requiring motorcycle helmets for all riders.^{vii}

For more than 33 years, Nebraska's all-rider motorcycle helmet requirement has been preventing fatalities, mitigating injuries and curbing costs. We urge you to take action to retain it.

Sincerely,

Catherine Chase, President

ⁱ Liu BC, Ivers R, Norton R, Boufous S, Blows S, and Lo SK, "Helmets for Preventing Injury in Motorcycle Riders (Review)," The Cochrane Library, 2009.

ⁱⁱ Traffic Safety Facts, Research Note: Motorcycle Helmet Use in 2021 – Overall Results, NHTSA, March 2022, DOT HS 813 270

ⁱⁱⁱ Nebraska Motorcycle Information Packet, Nebraska Department of Transportation, January 2023.

^{iv} Costs of Injuries Resulting from Motorcycle Crashes: A Literature Review, NHTSA, November 2002, DOT HS 809 242.

^v Helmet use Among Motorcyclists Who Died in Crashes and Economic Cost Savings Associated with State Motorcycle Helmet Laws – United States, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012.

^{vi} 2017 Traffic Safety Culture Index, Foundation for Traffic Safety, March 2018.

^{vii} Nebraska Motorcycle Information Packet, Nebraska Department of Transportation, January 2023.