



April 21, 2025

The Honorable Garlan Gudger, President Pro Tempore
The Honorable Steve Livingston, Majority Leader
The Honorable Bobby D. Singleton, Minority Leader
Alabama Senate
11 South Union Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

Dear President Pro Tempore Gudger, Majority Leader Livingston and Minority Leader Singleton:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), 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, opposes Senate Bill (SB) 302 which would repeal the all-rider motorcycle helmet use law. Advancing this legislation would be a deadly and costly mistake.

Motorcycles are the most hazardous form of motor vehicle transportation. In 2023, 6,335 motorcyclists were killed in the U.S., the highest number on record.ⁱ An additional 82,564 motorcyclists were injured in the same year.ⁱⁱ Motorcycle riders are nearly 22 times more likely to die in a crash than passenger vehicle occupants.ⁱⁱⁱ In 2023, 94 motorcyclists lost their lives in Alabama, a 45 percent increase since 2014.^{iv}

In addition to the physical and emotional burden, crashes involving motorcycles exact a financial toll. Annually, motorcycle rider crashes cost nearly \$17 billion in economic impacts and \$107 billion in societal harm as measured by comprehensive costs based on 2019 data.^v Accounting for inflation alone, in 2025, this would equate to \$21.5 billion in economic impacts, and over \$135 billion in societal harm.^{vi} Serious injuries and fatalities accounted for 83 percent of total comprehensive costs of motorcyclist crashes, compared to 60 percent for all motor vehicle crashes.^{vii}

Conversely, in 2019, motorcycle helmet use prevented \$21.2 billion in societal harm costs. Another \$9.4 billion could have been prevented if all motorcycle riders had worn helmets.^{viii} Updating for inflation only, in 2025 this would equate to \$26.8 billion in societal harm prevented and over \$11.9 billion in costs which could have been reduced respectively.^{ix} Helmet use lessens the cost of medical treatment, length of hospital stay and probability of long-term disability for motorcyclists injured in a crash.^x In states with an all-rider helmet use 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.^{xi}

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.^{xii} Helmet use reduces the risk of head injury by 69 percent and risk of death by 42 percent.^{xiii} Federal data show that in states with all-rider helmet use laws, use of helmets compliant with federal standards is 83 percent, compared to just 66 percent in states without such a law.^{xiv} In 2022, there were 7.7 times as many unhelmeted fatalities (1,986 fatalities) in states without a universal helmet use law compared to states with a universal helmet use law (258 fatalities).^{xv} These states were similar in total populations.^{xvi} A recent analysis from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) calculated that between 1976 and 2022, over 22,000 additional lives could have been saved if all states had enacted all-rider motorcycle helmet use laws.^{xvii}

Repeal of all-rider helmet use laws has tragic consequences. After repeal of their state's universal helmet requirement, the motorcyclist fatality rate increased 35 percent in Florida, 50 percent in Kentucky and 100 percent in Louisiana.^{xviii} More recently in Missouri, motorcyclist fatalities were 43 percent higher in 2023 compared to 2019, prior to repeal.^{xix} Nebraska's repeal took effect in 2024, and preliminary state data shows a 32 percent increase in motorcyclist fatalities relative to the five-year average.^{xx}

With motorcyclist fatalities at record levels nationally and rising in Alabama, we urge you to oppose SB 302. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Catherine Chase, President

-
- i Overview of Motor Vehicle Crashes in 2023, NHTSA, Apr. 2025, DOT HS 813 705, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/Publication/813705>.
 - ii Overview of Motor Vehicle Crashes in 2023, NHTSA, Apr. 2025, DOT HS 813 705, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/Publication/813705>.
 - iii Traffic Safety Facts: 2022 Data, Motorcycles, National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), July 2024 (Revised), DOT HS 813 589, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813589>.
 - iv State Traffic Safety Information for Alabama, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
 - v 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>.
 - vi CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, January 2019 to January 2025 dollars, available at <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.
 - vii 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>.
 - viii 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>.
 - ix CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, January 2019 to January 2025 dollars, available at <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.
 - x Costs of Injuries Resulting from Motorcycle Crashes: A Literature Review, NHTSA, November 2002, DOT HS 809 242.
 - xi 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.
 - xii 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>.
 - xiii 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.
 - xiv Traffic Safety Facts, Research Note: Motorcycle Helmet Use in 2023 – Overall Results, NHTSA, Sept. 2024, DOT HS 813 634, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813634>.
 - xv Traffic Safety Facts: 2022 Data, Motorcycles, National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), July 2024 (Revised), DOT HS 813 589, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813589>.
 - xvi 2020 Population and Housing State Data, US Census Bureau, available [here](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2020/states/).
 - xvii The human cost of allowing unhelmeted motorcycling in the United States, Oct. 2024, IIHS, available at: <https://www.iihs.org/topics/bibliography/ref/2317>.
 - xviii The human cost of allowing unhelmeted motorcycling in the United States, Oct. 2024, IIHS, available at: <https://www.iihs.org/topics/bibliography/ref/2317>.
 - xix Traffic Safety Facts: 2019 Data, Motorcycles, National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), September 2021 (Revised), DOT HS 813 112, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813112>; Traffic Safety Facts: 2021 Data, Motorcycles, National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), June 2023 (Revised), DOT HS 813 466, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813466>; State Traffic Safety Information for Missouri, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
 - xx “Nebraska seeing an increase in motorcycle fatalities, data shows”. First Alert 6. (2024, September 4), available [here](https://www.iihs.org/topics/bibliography/ref/2317).