

## S 2286 & H 7382 Mandatory Helmet Required

### OPPOSED

I am the Vice President and Co-Founder of the East Providence Elks Riders. I am a board member and Past President of the RI Motorcycle Association with over 40 years riding experience, both with and without a helmet.

Of approx. 24,750 registered motorcycles in the state from 2021 - 2023, there were an average of 12 fatalities each year. Thats an average of approx., .05% of registered motorcycles involved in fatal accidents.

### Rhode Island Motorcyclist Fatalities Per 100,000 Registered Motorcycles

<u>Year</u>	<u>Motorcyclist Fatalities</u>	<u>Total Motorcycle Registrations*</u>	<u>Motorcyclist Fatalities Per 100,000 Motorcycle Registrations</u>
<u>2019</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>24,175</u>	<u>53.77</u>
<u>2020</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>23,607</u>	<u>55.07</u>
<u>2021</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>24,833</u>	<u>52.35</u>
<u>2022</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>24,591</u>	<u>40.67</u>
<u>2023</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>24,801</u>	<u>64.51</u>

Our Neighbors in Mass average 145,925 registered motorcycles and have had an average of 64 fatalities in each of the last 3 years for an average of .04% of registered motorcycles involved in fatal accidents.

### Massachusetts Motorcyclist Fatalities Per 100,000 Registered Motorcycles

<u>Year</u>	<u>Motorcyclist Fatalities</u>	<u>Total Motorcycle Registrations*</u>	<u>Motorcyclist Fatalities Per 100,000 Motorcycle Registrations</u>
<u>2019</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>162,989</u>	<u>28.22</u>
<u>2020</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>138,123</u>	<u>39.82</u>
<u>2021</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>147,488</u>	<u>50.85</u>
<u>2022</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>146,187</u>	<u>38.99</u>
<u>2023</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>144,100</u>	<u>41.64</u>

So, Mass with a mandatory helmet law and RI with an operator choice law both show similar fatality rates. I question if perhaps more study is needed to determine why.

NHTSA does not approve helmets or other motor vehicle equipment, instead relying on a self certification process. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 218 is the standard used to certify compliance. This standard established the minimum performance requirements for helmets designed for use by motorcyclists. The basics of the impact test is that a simulated head form of proper shape and weight is fitted with the test helmet.

The helmet is then dropped from a height necessary to achieve a speed of approximately 13 miles per hour onto a flat steel anvil and a speed of approximately 12 miles per hour onto a hemispherical steel anvil.  
(FMVSS 218 sec S7.1 Impact attenuation test)

Additionally, The NHTSA contracted labs tested 167 helmet models between 2014 and 2019 to check compliance with FMVSS 218. These tests revealed a forty percent (40%) failure rate.  
(Simple google search "how many helmets are tested by DOT)

A motorcycle helmet under the right conditions can offer some head injury protection from an accident. However, the actual protection can be greatly diminished at higher travel speeds. The real protection comes from proactive rather than reactive safety measures.

Rider education and licensing, which RI already requires, prepares motorcyclists to operate and interact with other roadway users. Learning and practicing the skills necessary to avoid accidents in the first place is the primary factor in a comprehensive motorcycle safety plan. Additionally, educating all motor vehicle operators to be alert and free of impairment as they share the road is critical in deterring crashes caused by inattention.

Fact: Twenty-nine percent of motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes were riding without proper licensure at the time of the collision. A valid motorcycle license includes a rider having a valid driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement or possessing a motorcycle only license. Proper training and licensing are fundamental parts of motorcycle safety, taking unqualified riders off the road is a commonsense solution to lowering motorcycle fatalities.

Fact: The lack of a helmet mandate in the 31 states who have allowed freedom of choice does not prohibit someone from choosing to wear a helmet. In fact, a 2019 U.S. Department of Transportation audit showed that states without mandatory helmet laws still saw 56.5% of riders choose to wear a helmet.

Fact: A 2019 U.S. Department of Transportation Fatality Analysis Reporting System report showed that in crash study data, where helmet use was known, 36% of motorcyclists killed were not wearing a helmet. Conversely 61% of motorcycle fatalities involved a rider wearing a helmet. The remaining 3% had unknown usage. These numbers closely mirror NHTSA data on overall helmet usage which shows 64% of riders wearing helmets.

Thank You,  
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