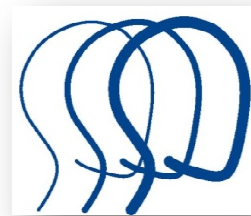


**Brain Injury Association of Maryland  
2009 Legislative Network  
March 2009**



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**1. The Motorcycle Helmet Law**

**ADVOCATES ALERT - ACTION NEEDED TODAY**

**PROTECT MARYLAND'S MOTORCYCLE HELMET LAW  
ACT NOW. ASK THESE SENATORS TO VOTE "NO" ON SB 766**

*Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee (\*co-sponsors of SB 766):*

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**TALKING POINTS:**

- **A fiscal and policy note for SB 766 is not available at this time. Following is fiscal impact information from the Maryland Department of Legislative Services about a similar motorcycle helmet repeal bill (HB 1203) in 2008.**
  - *Medicaid expenditures could increase beginning in FY2009 and continue to grow annually.*
  - *In 2009, the estimated cost to treat a motorcycle accident-related head injury will be \$59,000, compared to \$20,900 for one that does not include a head injury.*
  - *Individuals with traumatic brain injuries often receive care in nursing homes and State-psychiatric institutions due to a lack of funding for community-based services. This would result in higher Medicaid costs if the brain injuries were severe enough to eventually qualify for Medicaid coverage.*
  - *According to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the annual cost of serving one brain-injured individual in an inpatient setting is \$120,000.*

- **Studies show that the peak ages for motorcycle deaths and serious injuries are ages 21-25, then 26-30, and then 31-35.** It is the adult rider who is at risk so a “minors only” law like SB 766 is ineffective. In addition, a minors-only law is virtually unenforceable.
- **The death rate in Maryland dropped by 56% (per 10,000 registered motorcycles) over a 5-year period after enactment of the all-rider law in 1992.** Autopsy Study of Motorcyclist Fatalities: The Effect of the 1992 Maryland Motorcycle Helmet Use Law, American Journal of Public Health 1352-1355, Vol. 92, No. 8, August 2002.
- **In addition to family and friends, according to the National Transportation Safety Board, society as a whole pays the well-documented excess costs for un-helmeted riders:** medical care costs; the potentially even greater costs from productivity losses of individuals injured, disabled, or killed; and the costs incurred for first responders. (Testimony. Statement of the National Transportation Safety Board before the committee on Environmental Matters: Maryland House of Delegates on House Bill 1203. March 4, 2008.)
- **Of all the countermeasures to address motorcycle safety, only state all-rider helmet laws were rated as having proven effectiveness.** NHTSA, Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices, 2006.
- **Studies in other states already show that deaths increase after repeal of an all-rider helmet law.** Louisiana’s all-rider helmet repeal in 1999 caused motorcycle deaths to increase by 100 percent. (*National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [NHTSA] 2003*) This resulted in reinstatement of Louisiana’s helmet law in 2004. When Texas repealed its all-rider helmet law in 1997, the number of deaths jumped 31 percent. Arkansas also repealed its all-rider helmet law in 1997 and experienced a 21 percent increase in motorcycle deaths. (*NHTSA 2000*) A recent study commissioned by the Florida Department of Transportation shows that since Florida’s repeal in 2000, motorcycle deaths have risen almost 42 percent (*NHTSA*).

## **2. Brain Injury Awareness Day on Capitol Hill**

BIA of America and other stakeholder organizations are working closely with congressional staffs from the office of Congressmen Pascrell and Platt to plan for the awareness fair, briefing and evening reception taking place on March 25. The events are open to everyone and no registration is required.

BIA of America will be exhibiting at the fair along with 35 other groups who sign up on a first-come, first-serve basis. In addition to our banners and the award-winning video produced by BIA of New York State, the booth will feature an “empathy experience” for Hill staffers. The fair runs from 10 am to 2 pm in the First Floor Foyer of the Rayburn House Office Building.

The briefing, “*Mild Brain Injury: From the Football Field to the Battlefield*,” takes place from 3 pm to 4:30 pm in Room 345 of the Cannon House Office Building. The evening reception will take place from 6 pm to 7:30 pm in Room B-369 of the Rayburn House Office Building.

Brain Injury Association of Maryland (BIAM) will be in DC for the day. We are currently planning on attending the different sessions and meeting with our congressional representatives. If you are interested in joining us for the day, please call Uche at 1-800-221-6443 on Tuesday, Thursday or Friday.

### **Notes:**

- Do not hit reply to all
- To unsubscribe from this list, send an email to [volunteer5@biamd.org](mailto:volunteer5@biamd.org)
- You can go to BIAM’s website, [www.biamd.org](http://www.biamd.org) to find more legislative and brain injury information