

Press Release



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**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE:**

State of Florida Announces Large Decrease in Motorcycle-Related Deaths in 2009

Deland, FL, July 13, 2010 – In early July the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) announced new data revealing a large decline in deaths occurring from motorcycle crashes in 2009. Over the last few years, the State of Florida has been reporting a decreasing number of deaths while motorcycle registrations in Florida have been steadily increasing. From 2000 to 2008, Florida has reported an average increase of 12.98% per year in motorcycle registrations¹, but reported a 0.77%, 2.90%, and **25.10% DECREASE** in motorcycle crash fatalities for 2007, 2008, and 2009, respectively².

This is welcome news as motorcyclists in Florida have just celebrated the 10th anniversary of the freedom of choice when deciding if they were going to wear a helmet when going out to ride. Ten years ago on July 1, 2000, Governor Jeb Bush signed into law the repeal of Florida's thirty-year-old requirement for motorcyclists in FL to wear helmets. Motorcycle registrations in Florida went up nearly 20% in a one-year time span³ (2000-2001) immediately adjacent to this repeal.

Additionally, since 2004, the State of Florida has been reporting that the majority of motorcycle drivers and passengers in fatal crashes *have* been wearing the optional safety helmet. Although motorcycle helmets do offer some defensive measures when one is involved in a head-trauma accident, these numbers offer evidence that a helmet is not the magic safety device many purport them to be.

The large decline in motorcycle crash fatalities may possibly be attributed to better motorcyclists' training, as well as ABATE of Florida's copyrighted Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program (MSAP), which has been funded in part by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles for the last few years. ABATE of Florida, Inc.'s MSAP makes presentations to civic organizations, Driver's Education classes, public events, and many other opportunities, educating the motoring public that motorcycles are on all of Florida's roadways.

More information on these new startling numbers may be found on the DHSMV's website at www.flhsmv.gov. More information on ABATE of Florida, Inc.'s MSAP may be found on our website at www.abateflorida.com.

With over 7,500 members, ABATE of Florida, Inc. is Florida's largest Motorcyclists' Rights Organization, and the fourth largest nationwide. ABATE of Florida members consist of all types of motorcyclists. Our missions include educating the public about motorcycle awareness and continuing to fight in Tallahassee for the rights of every motorcyclist and the public in general. To aid in these ends, we have an exclusive lobbyist and have founded the Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program, both with the intentions to help make the roads safer for everyone.

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¹ US DOT, Federal Highway Administration, *Highway Statistics Series*. 2009 statistics are not yet available.

² Florida DHSMV's *Traffic Crash Statistics Report 2007, 2008, & 2009*

³ US DOT, Federal Highway Administration, *Highway Statistics Series 2000 & 2001*