

Press Release



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**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE:**

Helmet Use Is NOT the Problem in Florida...

Deland, FL, November 18, 2010 – Motorcyclists have finally made the Ten Most Wanted list. Not by the FBI, but by the NTSB, the National Transportation Safety Board. The NTSB is now calling for all states to adopt a mandatory helmet law, even though all current data suggests that the wearing of a helmet is NOT as major a determining statistic on saving motorcyclists' lives as once thought.

In 2000, ABATE of Florida, Inc. successfully lobbied to have the mandatory helmet law in Florida repealed. Although many have publicly cried out saying that motorcycle deaths have been on the rise ever since the helmet repeal, the government's own statistics simply do not support this claim.

According to Florida's Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles' report *Traffic Safety Facts, October 2010: Motorcycles*, since 2000 motorcycle registrations have risen by over 102%. With two exceptions, each year since then motorcycle registrations and related fatalities have been on the increase, but within 1% of each other when compared side-by-side. Although any death is never good news, statistically speaking this can be read to mean that the rise in the reported fatalities may be attributed to the rise in motorcycle registrations. One of the reported exceptions is the year 2009, where motorcycle registrations increased 102.4% since 2001, but fatalities only increased 63.4% in the same time frame. That same year, motorcycle fatalities were down 16% nationwide and over 25% in Florida since the previous year. In addition, the Florida DHSMV's *Traffic Crash Statistics Report 2009* reported that in 2009, **over 53% of all motorcyclists killed were wearing a helmet.**

With the above facts, there is no logic for a push to require helmet use. The ten-year rise in deaths can be directly attributed to the rise in motorcycle registrations. Since 2004, the State of Florida has reported that the majority of motorcycle drivers and passengers in fatal crashes have been wearing the optional safety helmet. Although motorcycle helmets may offer limited defensive measures when involved in a head-trauma accident, these numbers strongly suggest that a helmet is not the magic safety device many want them to be.

ABATE of Florida, Inc. asks Legislators to consider this fact: in Florida 61% of the motor vehicle vs. motorcycle collisions were the fault of the motor vehicle. The most common reason given by the vehicle driver was that they never saw the motorcycle. Texting while driving, hands on the cell phone instead of the steering wheel, and almost insignificant punishments when hitting a motorcyclist are all the real reasons why motorcyclists in Florida are being killed.

Florida now requires a motorcycle training program to receive a motorcycle endorsement on a driver's license. The motorcyclists are being trained to ride safely and defensively. Helmets will not save more motorcyclists; educating the motoring public about the presence of bikes on the road and stronger motivations to drive a car or truck safely and legally should be the direction state and federal congresses take. The numbers are clear; most motorcyclists are doing their part. It's now time for the rest of the motoring public to do theirs.

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