Effective Solutions for Improving Motorcyclist Safety

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Nebraska Motorcycle Helmet Law History

- Originally became law in 1967 (universal law)
- Repealed in 1977
  - In 1976 Congress revoked federal authority to assess penalties for noncompliance
- Reinstated in 1989
Repeal Efforts

- First bill to repeal introduced 1989
- Repeal bill introduced every biennium since at least 1999
- No attempts at repeal have succeeded
Nebraska Legislature

- Only state with a unicameral and nonpartisan legislative body
- 49 members, making it smallest legislative body of any state
- 33 votes needed to invoke cloture (overcome a filibuster)
- Only 25 votes needed to advance bill
- Repeal would have been successful without our cloture rule
Arguments for Repeal

• Individual freedom
• Increase tourism revenue
  • Sturgis rally in neighboring South Dakota
• All surrounding states except Missouri don’t require a helmet
Arguments for Keeping Law

• Helmets decrease the severity of head injuries, likelihood of death, and cost of medical care
• about 37% effective in preventing motorcycle deaths
• About 67% effective in preventing brain injuries
  • Nebraska 1989 repeal led to 22% reduction in serious head injuries
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