

Hello Delegates:

My Name is Shelli McLane. I am a motorcycle rider and I would like to take this opportunity to ask for your favorable support and vote for HB0639. As you all know, Abate of Md, inc. and many of your voting constituents have been continually asking for the ability to have freedom of choice for headgear wear in the operation of motorcycles' as it has been proven over and over again that helmets Do Not prevent accidents or deaths of motorcyclists. Mostly injuries sustained to our bodies is what kills us, all a helmet does (most of the time) is keep a head and face pretty for an open casket funeral. We have been asking for years for the ability to choose for ourselves whether we want to wear the required mandatory helmets. Helmets are a detriment to riders by my way of thinking. I saw a woman with a full faced helmet get drug to her death by getting her helmet caught under a truck after a thoughtless driver rearended the two riders on the road many years ago.

As a Voting rider, I personally would like the opportunity to make the choice of whether I wear a helmet or not. In the summertime, (even year round) when many motorcyclists take to the roads to either go to work, go for a pleasure ride, go to do a ride to support a charity or an individual, it is normally warm to hot temperature wise. Having to wear the helmet adds a burden to a rider. I have personally experienced extreme headaches and neck fatigue caused by the extra added weight on top of my head, which impinges on my ability to operate my motorcycle in a safe manner. I have had what I describe as my brain baked by the hot sun on a hot day while sitting in the endless traffic jams on the feeder roads around the state of Maryland, which leads to excessive heat overload, which again, can impede my ability to operate my motorcycle in a safe manner. I have had cigarettes thoughtlessly tossed out from passenger vehicles' get lodged between my face and my helmet, burning me. I have had to quickly react to dangers posed by drivers of other vehicles with the way they either throw items out of their vehicle windows or unsecured items coming out of their pickup truck, big truck or trailer beds. Helmets impede the ability to see some of the dangers posed by others out there on the roads. They impede our peripheral vision and our hearing and add undue weight.

If anything should be mandated, it should be required for every driver to at least take a simulated motorcycle course in drivers ed so they can be aware of the dangers posed by them out on the roads.

Luckily I live near the Pennsylvania line, so for the past couple of decades plus, from when Pa rescinded their Helmet requirements, since they are a helmet choice state, I will often take off with my friends and loved ones and ride up there and spend my money up there to purchase goods and services such as food, clothing, camping, entertainment, etc... and give them the business rather than support the businesses in the state of Md. due to their freedom of choice when it comes to wearing helmets. I would like the opportunity to support businesses in my state but until this mandate gets removed, I will take my money to where I am treated as a citizen who is listened to concerning my beliefs.

I started riding in the 1980s when there was no helmet mandate, took a break due to having my daughter, and when I finally had the money to purchase another motorcycle in the late 90s and found out the helmet mandate had been reinstated in 1992 which disappointed me greatly.

Pappy Boward, may He Rest in Peace (or as I like to say Ride in Paradise) was also a friend of mine and he, along with many others, fought for years to get this foolish law that was illegally enacted when Governor Shaffer and the Senate and Delegates kowtowed to the federal govt when they pulled the illegal and erroneous bait and switch of stating that federal funds would be withheld from states if the helmet laws weren't reinstated in 1992..... I was proud to stand by his side when we fought together in the 80s and was proud to rejoin him and Abate of Md, inc. in our efforts since when I rejoined the organization after taking a break to raise my daughter.

Abate fought and successfully won the right to freedom of choice in 1979 only to have it rescinded in 1992 and we have been fighting against this mandate ever since. As stated before, I am a voting motorcyclist and I do not support any mandate that curtails my ability to think for myself, assess my needs and create an environment in which I am comfortable and confident in my abilities to operate my motorcycle safely. Yet I do not fault others who choose to wear their helmets. I am not asking for the removal of wearing helmets, I am asking for MY GOD GIVEN RIGHT TO CHOOSE!

I am asking you to repeal this mandate on those grounds. Give me back the ability to author my own life, decisions, and choices. If you would like to discuss this further, I can be reached at 443-740-1901 or by email at shelli30gscout@yahoo.com

Respectfully,

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