

Transportation Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: 6161

AN ACT REQUIRING THE USE OF HELMETS BY MOTORCYCLE

Title: OPERATORS AND PASSENGERS UNDER TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE

Date Voted March 20, 2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: February 25, 2019

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Committee Bill

Rep. Michelle Cook, 65th Assembly District

REASONS FOR BILL:

To require the use of helmets by motorcycle operators and passengers under twenty-one years of age. In looking at several studies of states with helmet laws show a decrease in preventing fatal injuries to motorcycle riders and their passengers. CT DOT found that more than half of victims seriously injured or killed were not wearing helmets. This bill will require any motorcycle rider or passenger 21 and younger wear a helmet and should prevent excessive motorcycle deaths.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None submitted for Bill 6161

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Rep. Michelle Cook, 65th Assembly District, CGA: The NHTSA estimates that, "DOT compliant helmets are 37 % effective in preventing fatal injuries to motorcycle riders; and 41% of motorcycle passengers. Current CT law requires that motorcycle riders and passengers younger than 18 wear helmets .Anyone operating a motorcycle with a training permit must wear a helmet.

Government Relations, CT Hospital Association: The CHA supports bill 6161. Healthcare providers in our hospitals see the impact of injuries due to the inadequacy of proper helmet

use. "Requiring the use of helmets by motorcycle operators and passengers under twenty-one years of age would go a long way to improving the health and well-being of countless Connecticut residents."

Mary Jane M. Williams PhD, RN, Chair Government Relations, Connecticut Nurses Association; Professor Emeritus, Central CT State University: There is a plethora," of research documenting that wearing a helmet significantly reduces the chance of brain trauma or a fatality for operators and passengers on a motorcycle.

Dan Coppolella, Bristol, CT: He supports 6161. He is not anti-helmet but pro-choice. It should be a rider's freedom to choose, or not, to wear a helmet. Inexperienced riders have a higher risk. This bill raises the age to 21 to require helmets.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

William Hemenway, Seymour, CT: No need to raise the age to 21 from 18 for using a helmet when riding a motorcycle. If you are old enough to go to war and kill people at 18, you are old enough to decide to wear a helmet or not.

Mark Howard, Plainfield, CT: Data is mixed if helmets would save lives. Current law requires that people have a permit to ride a motorcycle and under 18 to wear a helmet. That has seemed to work for many years. He urges that you do not support any more attacks on the motorcycle riders in CT.

Reported by: P. Silverman

Date: March 25, 2019