



The Maryland State Medical Society

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TO: The Honorable Brian E. Frosh, Chairman
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable John Astle

FROM: Joseph A. Schwartz, III
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise

DATE: February 25, 2010

RE: **OPPOSE** – Senate Bill 492 – *Vehicle Laws – Protective Headgear Requirement for Motorcycle Riders - Exceptions*

The Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi) which represents over 7,300 Maryland physicians and their patients opposes Senate Bill 492.

Senate Bill 492 proposes to make certain exceptions to the current motorcycle helmet law. Further, it requires the State to evaluate the impact of the change in the law with respect to motorcycle injuries and fatalities. The changes made to the law sunset in three years.

The opponents to Maryland's motorcycle helmet requirements have tried to repeal those requirements for a number of years to no avail. Senate Bill 492 is clearly aimed at the same objective in a manner that, on its surface, appears more reasonable but does little more than increase motorcycle operators' risk for death and disability for a three year period while the State documents the findings that were conclusively proven when the helmet law was first imposed.

There is no ambiguity in the data related to the benefits of mandatory helmet laws. In Maryland, the incidence of injury and death decreased dramatically following the passage of the current helmet requirements. No benefit can be gained by putting individuals at risk to try to prove a point which will, without question, reaffirm the need for the current law. MedChi urges an unfavorable report.

For more information call:

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