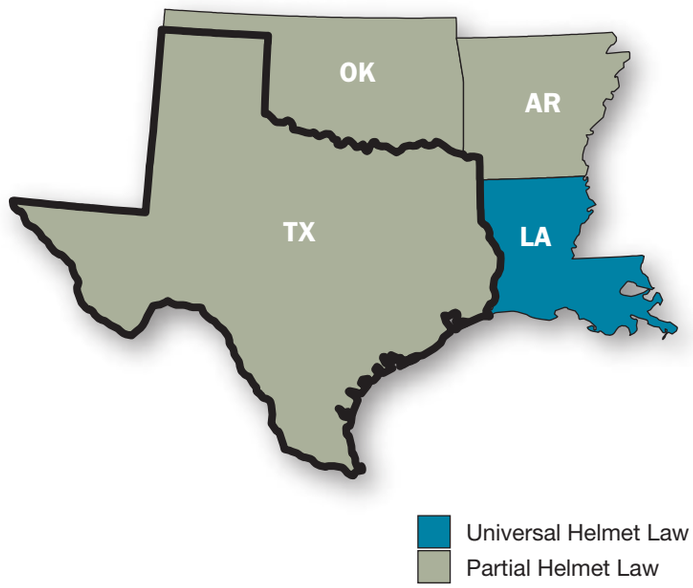
TEXAS
SAVE LIVES, SAVE MONEY

HOW DOES YOUR STATE MEASURE UP?



During the first full year following the weakening of Texas' helmet law, deaths jumped 31% compared to the year prior to repealing its law.[1]

REGIONAL COMPARISON OF HELMET LAW IMPACT

State	Type of Law/ Year Enacted	Lives saved by helmet use per 100,000 registered motorcycles, 2010 [2,3]	Economic costs saved by helmet use per 100,000 registered motorcycles, 2010 [2,3]
Arkansas	/1997	7	$14M
Louisiana	/2004	53	$108M
Oklahoma	/1976	6	$12M
Texas	**/1997**	**24**	**$48M**

A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

	Lives saved by helmet use per 100,000 registered motorcycles, 2010 [2,3]
Average number of lives saved for states with a **Universal Law**	36
Average number of lives saved for states with a **Partial Law**	10
Average number of lives saved for states with **no law**	4

	Economic costs saved by helmet use per 100,000 registered motorcycles, 2010 [2,3]
Average money saved for states with a **Universal Law**	$73 million
Average money saved for states with a **Partial Law**	$21 million
Average money saved for states with **no law**	$9 million

WHAT CAN TEXAS DO?

✓ **Consider enacting a universal helmet law.** Strengthening your law will save the lives of many Texans, protect your families and communities from preventable tragedy, and free up money for your other priorities.

1. Preusser DF, Hedlund JH, Ulmer RG. *Evaluation of motorcycle helmet law repeal in Arkansas and Texas*. Washington (DC): National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation; 2000.
2. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Lives and costs saved by motorcycle helmets, 2010. Washington (DC): National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation; 2012. Unpublished data.
3. Federal Highway Administration. *Highway statistics 2010: State motor-vehicle registrations (Table MV-1)*. Washington (DC): Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation; 2011.

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

QUICK FACTS

- The single most effective way for states to save lives and save money is a universal helmet law.
- Helmets reduce the risk of death by 37%.
- Helmets reduce the risk of head injury by 69%.
- The United States saved $3 billion due to helmet use in 2010.
- The United States could have saved an additional $1.4 billion in 2010 if all motorcyclists had worn helmets.
- Helmets do not reduce visibility or impair hearing.

FAQs

Do helmet laws interfere with a person's freedom to choose whether to wear a helmet?
Yes. Many laws restrict people's freedom to perform behaviors judged contrary to the public good. These include drunk driving laws, cellphone use laws, and infectious disease quarantine laws, to name a few. Courts usually uphold such laws as important to the nation's well-being.

Don't helmets make it harder for riders to see or hear?
No. Helmets that meet the DOT standard do not reduce visibility or impair hearing. By protecting people's heads in crashes, helmets only make riding safer.

If a motorcyclist chooses not to wear a helmet, does it only affect him?
No, not if the rider crashes. Unhelmeted riders injured in a crash have substantially higher healthcare costs than helmeted riders. When the rider is insured, these costs are passed on to others in the form of higher health insurance premiums. Unhelmeted riders are more likely to be uninsured than other riders. When the rider is uninsured, their medical expenses may be paid for using taxpayers' funds.

Can motorcycle safety education substitute for helmet laws?
No. The benefits of motorcycle safety education are unclear. A universal helmet law is the most effective way to reduce the number of people who are seriously injured or killed from motorcycle crashes.

Are universal helmet laws really that much better than partial helmet laws?
Yes. There is strong, substantial, and clear evidence that universal helmet laws save lives and save money. This is not true for partial laws. When a universal helmet law is enacted, helmet use dramatically increases, and states see an across-the-board decrease in deaths. If states repeal the law, they see an increase in deaths.

PUBLIC HEALTH LEADERSHIP TO KEEP PEOPLE SAFE ON THE ROAD — EVERY DAY.

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention

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