



**Statement of Judith Lee Stone  
President, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety  
In Opposition to House Bill 4747  
House Committee on Regulatory Reform  
Michigan Legislature**

March 24, 2010

As President of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), I am pleased to submit this testimony for the record. Advocates is a coalition of consumer, safety, public health and medical groups, and insurance companies and organizations working together to pass highway and auto safety laws that prevent unnecessary deaths and injuries. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to **House Bill (HB) 4747**, legislation repealing Michigan's lifesaving all-rider motorcycle helmet law.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2008, motorcycle rider fatalities increased for the eleventh year in a row (4,955 fatalities). In Michigan alone, 121 motorcyclists were killed. 12% of those who died in Michigan were not wearing a helmet (2008). Head injury is the leading cause of death in motorcycle crashes, and helmets are proven to be 37% effective in preventing fatal injuries to motorcycle riders. There are in place federal head protection safety standards for automobiles, and a state all-rider helmet use law is the only equivalent requirement that provides head protection for motorcyclists. In 2007, the National Transportation Safety Board recommended that all states enact all-rider helmet laws.

Every state that has repealed their all-rider motorcycle helmet law has experienced an increase in deaths and brain injuries. After Louisiana repealed their helmet law in 1999, motorcycle fatalities dramatically increased by 100% and state health care costs for brain-injured motorcyclists soared as well. That is why Louisiana reinstated their law in 2004.

It has been reported that only slightly more than half of motorcycle crash victims have private health insurance. Inpatient charges for brain injured motorcyclists were more than double the charges for those not sustaining a brain injury (NHTSA, 2003).

At a time when Michigan's budget needs are growing and many health, safety, and educational programs are inadequately funded, your state cannot afford to repeal this critical, lifesaving law.

**Advocates strongly opposes HB 4747 and urges you to vote NO.**

Thank you.

Judith Lee Stone, President  
Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety  
202-408-1711