

HB 1371 -- MOTORCYCLE HELMETS

SPONSOR: Miller

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness by a vote of 8 to 3.

This bill provides that wearing a motorcycle helmet that is not in compliance with required standards and specifications must be a secondary offense for which the wearer can be cited only if he or she is stopped by law enforcement for a separate primary offense.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this gives motorcycle riders more freedom because they can still wear helmets of their choice, especially if they ride safely otherwise.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Miller; Abate For Missouri & Missouri Confederation of Clubs; and Bill Kempker.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that wearing an artificial helmet is like not wearing a helmet at all, and approved helmets are in place for a reason. Helmets are a primary safety feature, so they should remain a primary law. If this bill passes, motorcycle riders will be more likely to ride farther distances and without helmets if you allow them to not be pulled over just for helmet law violations. Opponents also say that weakening any aspect of the current law will increase taxes for taxpayers.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Psychiatric Society; Missouri Hospital Association; Raymond Pierce, Missouri Motorcycle Safety Program; Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association Of Missouri; and the Missouri State Medical Association.