

HB 1657 -- MOTORCYCLE HELMETS

SPONSOR: Kelley

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

This bill makes it unlawful for a law enforcement agency to stop, inspect, or detain a motorcyclist to solely enforce the requirement that he or she is wearing a helmet.

This bill is the same as HB 591 (2015).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill gives motorcycle riders the freedom to choose whether to wear a helmet at all if they are otherwise riding safely by making the helmet law a secondary offense.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Kelley; Bill Kempker; Tony Shephard, Abate For Missouri & Missouri Confederation of Clubs.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that in places where there are no helmet laws or looser helmet laws, fatalities are higher. Furthermore, the cost of brain injuries is \$400,000, and when people do not have insurance, taxpayers will pick up the tab.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri State Medical Association; Maureen Cunningham, Brain Injury Association Of Missouri; Missouri Motorcycle Safety Program; Bill Whitfield, Missouri Department Of Transportation; and the Missouri Psychiatric Society.