

## **2009 House Bill 4028**

### **Helmet Safety**

Michigan state legislators are currently reviewing House Bill 4028, sponsored by State Representative Richard LeBlanc (D-Westland). It was created to make helmet use optional for those operating or riding a motorcycle on Michigan roads.

Helmet-repeal legislation passed last year, but was vetoed by the governor due to increased injuries, fatalities, and economic costs. "Heads First," a coalition composed of motorcycle riders, health providers, advocacy organizations like the Brain Injury Association of American (BIA), and insurance companies want to see the helmet law preserved. On the scene, leading the fight for safety is SMARTER-USA.org, a group of skilled motorcyclists who are working to keep helmets mandatory.

Michigan has the benefit of studying the effect of helmet repeal in other states, such as Pennsylvania. When data from Pennsylvania's departments of Health and Transportation was analyzed from the years 2001-2002 and 2004-2005, study authors from the University of Pittsburgh found that motorcyclist helmet use decreased from 82 percent to 58 percent. The registration-adjusted head injury death rate increased by 32 percent, whereas the non-head injury death rate did not change.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that helmets saved 1,784 motorcyclists' lives in 2007, and that 800 more could have been saved if all motorcyclists had worn helmets. Motorcyclists are about 35 times as likely as car passengers to die in a crash (per vehicle mile traveled).

Currently, Michigan is one of 20 states where wearing a helmet is mandatory for motorcyclists.

For more information on this bill and other important legislative information in Michigan, visit [michiganvotes.org](http://michiganvotes.org), or visit the Brain Injury Association of Michigan's Web site at [biami.org](http://biami.org).

#### **About Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers, Inc.**

Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers, Inc. has been a provider of rehabilitation services for children, teens and adults with brain injuries since 1983. With more than 30 residential locations, two treatment centers, a NeuroRehab Campus and two vocational centers, our organization offers a broad range of brain injury recovery and rehabilitation services. Our residential settings include adult homes, child and adolescent homes, townhouses and semi-independent living apartments. Day treatment and outpatient services are also available.