

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12 2007

RE: S.B. No. 782

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2007
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Transportation and International Affairs,
to which was referred S.B. No. 782 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO USE OF SAFETY HELMETS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require all moped drivers
to wear safety helmets while operating a moped.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure
from the Department of Transportation, Department of Health (DOH),
and State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company. Testimony in
opposition was received from Street Bikers United Hawaii.

Your Committee finds that helmet use while driving a moped
significantly reduces the likelihood of serious or fatal injuries.
Drivers of mopeds are particularly vulnerable to head injuries in
accidents. Head injuries commonly result in permanent injury or
death or in profound and disabling physical and mental effects
which can be costly. Unhelmeted moped riders of all ages are at
risk for head injury, a leading cause of death and disability in
moped crashes. According to the DOH, an average of five moped
riders are killed each year in Hawaii, and another 266 are
involved in major crashes. From 2001 to 2005, twenty-four riders
who did not wear helmets were killed and nearly two-thirds of the
250 other injuries sustained a traumatic brain injury. Of the
moped drivers admitted to Queen's Medical Center, traumatic brain
injury was nearly twice as likely among those not wearing helmets
compared to those wearing helmets.



The intent of this measure is to protect the health and safety of a population susceptible to avoidable crippling injuries. Act 63, Session Laws of Hawaii 2006, required drivers of mopeds who are less than eighteen years of age to wear a safety helmet while driving. Your Committee believes that all persons, not just those who are under the age of eighteen, should be required to wear a safety helmet when operating a moped.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Transportation and International Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 782 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Labor.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Transportation and
International Affairs,



J. KALANI ENGLISH, Chair



