

LATE TESTIMONY

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION HEARING

FEBRUARY 14, 2009, 9:00 am
STATE CAPITOL, CONF. RM. 309

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1425, RELATING TO MOPEDS

CHAIR JOSEPH SOUKI, VICE CHAIR KAREN LEINANI AWANA, AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1425, which requires riders of mopeds to wear helmets and provides fines for violations.

My name is Albert Burian. I received a brain injury more than sixteen years ago on Dec. 11, 1992, when I was struck by a tow truck while I was crossing Wilder Avenue. My life has changed completely since that incident. And I have met a number of people with brain injuries from traffic accidents involving mopeds and other two-wheeled vehicles since then. They were not wearing helmets at the time of their accidents.

Brain injury changes the life of the individual completely. Depending on what part of the brain gets injured, the individual may suffer physical, cognitive or behavioral problems, and what is so sad about it is that very few rehabilitative services are available and affordable in Hawaii for the survivors after the initial acute care phase.

The best cure for brain injury is PREVENTION. According to statistics gathered by the Brain Injury Association of America, 1.4 million people sustain a brain injury in the United States each year. Direct medical costs and indirect costs, such as lost productivity from TBI, totaled an estimated \$60 billion in the U.S. in 2000. Wearing a helmet can make a big difference. A recent study showed that the use of helmets reduces the risk of brain injuries by 88%.

I urge you to pass HB 1425. It will help save lives. It will help reduce the number of brain injuries related to crashes.

Sincerely,



Albert V. Burian
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