

SMARTER Position Statements

Motorcycle Helmet Use: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on 10/14/17. Updated and approved on May 13, 2024*

Research available here: <https://smarter-usa.org/research/helmets-laws/>

SMARTER strongly advocates all riders wear a quality full face helmet labeled as being approved by one or more of the internationally recognized organizations (for example, FIM Racing Homologation Programme for Helmets (FRHPhe), United States Department of Transportation (DOT), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE R 22-06), or Snell.

Full Gear: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on 10/14/17. Updated and approved on May 13, 2024*

Research available here: <https://smarter-usa.org/research/protective-gear/>

SMARTER advocates that riders wear all the gear, every time they ride. All the gear means the right gear for the ride that also meets the basic criteria of the 4C's - covered, comfortable, conspicuous and contemporary.

All-rider Motorcyclist Helmet Use Requirements or Motorcycle Helmet Laws:
Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on 10/14/17. Updated and approved on May 13, 2024

Research is here: <https://smarter-usa.org/research/helmets-laws/helmet-law-effectiveness/>
<https://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2023-Countermeasures-that-Work-11th-Edition.pdf>

All -rider motorcyclist helmet use requirements are the only countermeasure determined to be effective by several high-quality evaluations with consistent results. Unhelmeted riders are a problem we can do something about. The most effective strategy to increase helmet use is enactment of all-rider motorcyclist helmet requirements.

SMARTER supports the enactment of all-rider motorcyclist helmet use requirements and opposes the repeal or weakening of existing all-rider motorcyclist helmet use laws.

Novelty Helmet Use: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on 10/14/17. Updated and approved May 13, 2024*

Research available here: <https://smarter-usa.org/research/helmets-laws/helmet-effectiveness/>, [https://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/6_2007_Summary_of_Novelty .pdf](https://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/6_2007_Summary_of_Novelty.pdf)

Research has consistently demonstrated that motorcyclist helmets meeting recognized standards save lives and reduce the risk of head, face and brain injuries in the event of a crash. Research has also demonstrated novelty helmets have very little, if any, impact-absorbing capability.

SMARTER calls for a ban on the production and sale of novelty helmets to motorcyclists.

Anti-lock Braking Systems: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on 01/13/18. Updated and approved May 13, 2024*

Research is here: <https://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/ihs-ABS-Petition-Nov.-2023.pdf>, <https://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021-Motorcycle-Antilock-Braking-Systems-and-Fatal-Crash-Rates-Updated-Results.pdf>

SMARTER strongly advocates all riders choose to purchase ABS equipped motorcycles and SMARTER joins other motorcyclist safety advocates in requesting NHTSA begin rulemaking to require motorcycle ABS, without further delay, as a key step in improving safety for motorcyclists on our nation's roads.

Motorcyclist and Motorcycle Conspicuity: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on 03/24/18. Updated and approved May 13, 2024*

Research is here: <https://smarter-usa.org/research/conspicuity-highviz/>

SMARTER strongly advocates all riders choose to wear High-Viz gear, make modifications to their motorcycle to increase conspicuity, and make riding choices keeping in mind the advantages of making themselves and their motorcycle more conspicuous.

Intelligent Transportation Systems: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on 01/12/19. Updated and approved May 13, 2024*

Research is here: <http://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Intelligent-Transport-Systems-and-Motorcycle-Safety.pdf>

SMARTER recommends riders work to stay knowledgeable regarding Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), strive to engage the motorcyclist community and general public to improve the design and acceptance of motorcycle ITS, embrace upcoming technology and collaborate with all sectors and stakeholders to promote ITS.

Alcohol and Drug Impairment: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on May 13, 2024*

Research available here: <https://smarter-usa.org/research/alcohol-impairment/>

SMARTER's position is that States should develop, fund, implement, and maintain methods to detect, enforce, and sanction impaired motorcyclists. High visibility enforcement coupled with post-conviction interventions should include, but not be limited to, vehicle ignition interlocks, treatment, education, and sanctions on operator's license.

Graduated Licensing System (GLS) and/or Tiered Motorcycle Licensing (TML): *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Directors on May 13, 2024*

Research available here: <https://smarter-usa.org/research/licensing/>

Under such systems, new motorcyclists are subject to specific restrictions limiting their exposure to higher-risk situations. This could include limiting riders to smaller, less powerful motorcycles or to certain times of day, with additional restrictions on maximum speed and carrying passengers. As the rider gains experience, riskier riding situations are permitted

SMARTER's position is that a Graduated Licensing System and/or Tiered Motorcycle Licensing programs adhere to principles of human behavior and may be effective if implemented well.

.05% BAC Limit: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Director's on May 13, 2024*

Research Available here: https://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Utah-Evaluation-TrafficTech_dot_60427_DS1-5.pdf, https://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Rationale-Behind-a-.05-BAC-Limit-for-Driving_Fell_2023.pdf, <https://smarter-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/2023-.05-BAC-Fact-Sheet-Advocates-for-Highway-and-Auto-Safety.pdf>

Lowering the per se level to 0.05 BAC has been a proven strategy backed by numerous studies that show 1) drivers are significantly impaired at a 0.05 BAC, and 2) lowering to 0.05 BAC reduces drinking and driving and the related consequences. Research is clear that lowering the BAC limit from 0.08 to 0.05 is a deterrent to **ALL** those who drink and drive. Such legislation reduces the number of drinking drivers involved in fatal crashes at all BAC levels. Virtually all drivers are impaired concerning driving performance at 0.05 BAC. The risk of being involved in a crash increases significantly at 0.05% BAC.

SMARTER encourages all U.S. states to adopt legislation establishing .05% BAC or lower as the maximum allowable for legal operation of a vehicle, including a motorcycle, on any public roadway.

Lane Splitting/filtering: *Approved by the SMARTER Board of Director's on March 20, 2025*

Research Available here: <https://smarter-usa.org/research/lane-splitting/>

There is a scarcity of quality U.S. based research on the risk of crashing associated with lane splitting/filtering. Worldwide research on splitting/filtering indicates the practice may enhance traffic flow in locations where there is a significant percentage of the traffic mix riding powered two-wheel vehicles; however, the research does not indicate that splitting/filtering increases motorcyclist safety.

SMARTER advocates for research in the U. S. states currently (03/20/2025) allowing the practice in order to better understand the safety risks or benefits of lane splitting/filtering. However, until further research evidence shows a clear correlation between lane splitting/filtering and increased motorcyclist safety, SMARTER opposes reference of safety as a justification for enactment of laws allowing lane splitting/filtering.