

## Erroneous Arguments Exposed

### The Fallacies of the “It Only Affects Me” Argument

Anti-helmet-law advocates claim that if they were to suffer a debilitating injury or were killed because they had chosen not to wear a helmet it would be solely their problem and that no one else would be affected. If someone who is significant to you (a daughter, spouse, or parent) is killed or suffers a traumatic brain injury, do you think you would just shrug it off as “his or her choice”? **The helmet issue is NOT a simple “it only affects me” issue. It is part of a much more complicated citizen safety effort, and our best effort must include a mandatory helmet law covering all riders.**

### The Fallacies of the “Individual Freedom” or “It's the American Way” Argument

The following is an excerpt from “Michigan Helmet Law,” by George Hick, P.E., as published on page 12 of the July 2005 issue of *Reference Points: The Journal of the Michigan Association of Traffic Accident Investigators*:

B.R.A.G. and other lobbyists, view the use of helmets by motorcyclists as a “freedom of choice” issue based on the American ideals of Truth and Liberty. Perhaps they are referring to the often quoted sentence from the Declaration of Independence that states, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” But, the “freedom of choice” argument stops short. The very next sentence states “That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” **The preamble of the Constitution of the United States indicates why a government must establish laws, to “insure domestic tranquility”, and to “promote the general welfare and secure the Blessing of Liberty to ourselves”.** Further, the “Bill of Rights” the first ten Amendments to the Constitution, does not give individuals the ‘right’ to do as they please. Rather the state has a positive role in assuring that all citizens will have equal protection and justice under law and equal opportunities to exercise the privileges of citizenship. **The privileges of citizenship come with a price**, whether paying taxes or buckling up, but is often viewed by some as unfair.... Wearing a motorcycle helmet while riding, like driving a car with a seat belt on, is **a cost to have the privileges, not an individual right to do as one pleases at the consequence of the other citizens.** (Emphasis added.)