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LB 303

number of fatalities per 1,000 motorcycle drivers in Nebraska. From 1990...1982 through 1988, when there was no helmet law in effect, there were 177 fatalities. That was 0.44 fatalities per 1,000 motorcycle drivers. There were 406,400 drivers. Now those drivers increased to 594,448, which in my math is approximately 188,000. That's, you know, almost 50 percent increase in the number of drivers. But between 1989 and 2002, the number of fatalities dropped from 177 to 119. That's 0.2 fatalities per 1,000 motorcycle drivers. That, in itself, is extremely dramatic and it shows even with a huge increase in drivers the huge decrease in fatalities. Then look at the number of injuries which was equally as dramatic, and I think points out very obviously why we don't want this legislation; '82 to '88, the total number of injuries, 7,686. This was with motorcycle registrations of 278,402. Between 1989 and 2002, when we had a motorcycle helmet bill in place, those injuries, total number of injuries dropped to 4,802. That's a reduction of 2,800 injuries, about 40 percent again. That's substantial. That's with a total number of registrations that went up to 293,365. So '82 to '88, you're looking at 27.61 injuries per 1,000 of motorcycle registrations. With helmets, that dropped to 16.37 injuries. That's a substantial argument, folks, on why we need to continue the legislation that we have in place. And I hope that you will really, truly think about that. And I want to get back to the amendment a little bit. I'm asking very simply, if this body insists that they want to change this legislation, let's make certain that we have a primary enforcement. Let's make certain that we really have a law. We don't have a law if we don't have a primary enforcement, and it's not a matter of law enforcement out there just waiting to stop somebody. It's a matter of protecting lives. It's a matter of saving money for the state. And so, please, remember the amendment that we're asking is to return this to a primary rather than a secondary law. This should be a slam dunk.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BYARS: This shouldn't be anything that we should be arguing about. This is something that should be...we shouldn't...why should we not do this? I mean we're talking just a little less than 2 percent of the peo...riders in this