Motorcycle Helmet Laws

Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation
The Community Preventive Services Task Force recommends universal motorcycle helmet laws based on strong evidence of effectiveness.

Facts about Motorcycle Helmets Laws
Motorcycle helmets reduce the risk of dying in a crash by about 42% and reduce the risk of sustaining a head injury by about 69%\(^1\). Motorcycle helmet laws require motorcycle riders to wear a helmet while riding on public roads. In the U.S., these laws are implemented at the state level with varying provisions and fall into two categories:

- Universal helmet laws apply to all motorcycle operators and passengers.
- Partial helmet laws apply only to certain motorcycle operators such as those under a certain age (usually 18); novices (most often defined as having less than one year of experience); or those who do not meet the state’s requirement for medical insurance coverage. Passengers on motorcycles are not consistently covered under partial helmet laws.

Systematic Review Findings
- In U.S. states that replaced universal helmet laws with partial laws:
  - Helmet use declined by a median of 41 percentage points
  - Fatalities increased by a median of 38%
  - Non-fatal head injuries increased by a median of 69%
- Economic evidence shows that universal motorcycle helmet laws produce substantial economic benefits that greatly exceed costs.

Learn More
Summary of Evidence and Task Force Finding
http://www.thecommunityguide.org/mvoi/motorcyclehelmets/helmetlaws.html

CDC Motorcycle Safety Guide
http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/mc/guide/index.html

Motorcycle Costs
http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6123a1.htm

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
http://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/laws/helmetuse?topicName=motorcycles