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FLOOR DEBATE

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press the safety officials for better helmets. Now, I was hoping to give Senator Hudkins an answer to some questions that she asked Doctor...or, Senator Smith. I keep wanting to demote you back there. At any rate, what I was going to tell Senator Hudkins was this. Same article; this is the national report from last year, from the American College of Surgeons, Trauma Committee. And I might tell you that this is the worldwide trauma committee. Although initial examination of the raw data on deaths associated with motorcycle crashes suggests that the motorcycle fatality rates are higher in states without helmet laws, a more complete evaluation, controlling for multiple variables, demonstrates that the opposite is true. By controlling for intervening effects such as population, weather, alcohol consumption, urban versus rural roads, they were able to demonstrate the the death rates in states with full helmet laws were lower than death rates...

PRESIDENT SHEEHY PRESIDING

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: One minute.

SENATOR JOHNSON: ...in states without full helmet laws. Sadly, as demonstrated, Arkansas and Texas' repeal of the universal helmet law is associated with an increase in both fatalities and serious head injuries. In Florida, scenes...deaths from motorcycles, riders, doubled after repeal of the law. In summary, they say this, the world's premier organization: In conclusion, society incurs enormous direct and indirect costs when nonhelmeted motorcyclists are involved in crashes. Helmet laws increase helmet uses, and decrease the rate of fatal and serious injuries and costs. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Thank you, Senator Johnson. (Visitors introduced.) Senator Beutler, you're recognized to speak on FA149, followed by Senator Erdman and Senator Howard.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature, when I left off, we were talking about Kentucky and Louisiana and Arkansas and Texas, who in the years of 1997 through 1999 repealed their motorcycle helmet laws. And again I repeat, these were years when registrations were on the upturn.