



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM BARBARA BRY

FIRST DISTRICT

November 5, 2019

Assemblymembers Heath Flora, Todd Gloria, Phillip Chen, and Evan Low
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0013

RE: Request to Repeal Assembly Bill-2989 Motorized Scooters Helmet Exemption

Dear Assemblymembers Flora, Gloria, Chen and Low:

I respectfully request that you repeal the helmet exemption passed under Assembly Bill-2989. My concerns center on public safety, environmental issues and the potential long-term liability for local governments.

The key responsibility of state government is to protect the health, safety and well-being of its citizens. On January 1, 2019, Assembly Bill-2989 went into effect and amended previous law, which had required all electric scooters riders to wear helmets.

The public safety consequences were foreseeable and unfortunately, our emergency rooms and trauma centers are now experiencing alarming rates of severe head and bodily injuries that could have been prevented by simply wearing a helmet. According to a recent report authored by several UC San Diego affiliates, scooter-related injuries have significantly increased, alcohol and illicit drug use among the patients was common, and helmet use was extremely rare.¹

We are also discovering that electric scooters are not as beneficial to the environment as once purported by the companies. Data is emerging from cities across the country that document how scooters are replacing walking, biking and public transit options. The intent of the legislation to get residents out of their cars is not happening at a rate that was anticipated.

A further concern is the scooter industry business model which is unsustainable. One by one, these companies will drop by the wayside, leaving cities with millions of dollars in legal liabilities caused by scooter accidents.

Please advocate for the health and safety of Californians. There was no basis for removing the original helmet requirement other than to appease the corporate interests of these new, disruptive companies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry

¹ Kobayashi, et al. The e-merging e-pidemic of e-scooters. Trauma Surgery & Acute Care Open 2019
<<https://tsaco.bmj.com/content/4/1/e000337>>.