



1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Suite 1000  
Washington, D.C. 20004

May 29, 2014

The Honorable Dwaine Caraway  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Dallas City Hall  
1500 Marilla Street, Room 5FN  
Dallas, TX 75201

Dear Mayor Pro Tem Caraway:

Since 1996, Dallas has been a national safety leader in having a law on the books which requires every individual riding a bike helmet must wear a bike helmet. While some states and cities have laws requiring bike helmets for kids, very few require it for adults. Dallas deserves our thanks for this leadership position as the largest city in the U.S. to require an all-rider helmet law.

Now, however, Dallas is considering a ride backwards with the consideration of an ordinance which would repeal the bike helmet law entirely or for adults. Safe Kids opposes both versions. We know that the repeal is being considered as the city joins the worldwide bike share movement. Biking is important, environmentally and for health's sake, but policy must be that it should be done safely.

Safe Kids Worldwide is a global network of coalitions whose mission is to prevent accidental childhood injury, the number one killer of kids in the United States. We have more than 600 coalitions in the United States and networks in 23 countries, with 10 coalitions based in Texas. Our Safe Kids Greater Dallas coalition is based at Children's Medical Center of Dallas. We agree with our coalition's position statement on the repeal ordinance.

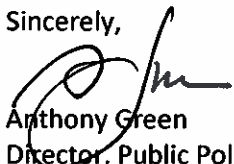
A total repeal allowing kids to ride bikes is dangerous. It comes at a time when there is heightened awareness of the dangers of traumatic brain injury in youth sports activity. And the statistics support keeping this leadership bill in place (see attached fact sheet).

The brains of Dallas, especially those of children, are the city's greatest asset.

We believe allowing adults to forego the protection of a bike helmet is a significant mistake, too. A child seeing their parent riding a bike without a helmet receives the wrong message. As role models, parents teach their kids by word *and by deed*. It should not be "Ride as I say, not as I do." The council sends a negative message by abdicating its own role model function.

We urge the Council to maintain Dallas's leadership position by rejecting any repeal. Uppermost, however, is the critical need to maintain the helmet requirement for kids 17 and under for safety.

Sincerely,



Anthony Green  
Director, Public Policy  
Safe Kids Worldwide



[safekids.org](http://safekids.org)

## Fact Sheet Data and Economic Analysis Support Bike Helmet Requirement

- **Experience Involving Dallas Kids.** Annually, Dallas Children’s Medical Center Level 1 Trauma Service admits an average of 93 patients injured from bicycle-related injuries. It is the 7th most common traumatic injury mechanism at Children’s. The Hospital’s research estimates an average of 75 percent of patients injured while riding bicycles were not wearing a helmet at the time of the fall or when hit by a vehicle as they were cycling.
- **Helmets Reduce Injury.** Helmets reduce the risk of head injury by at least 45 percent, brain injury by 33 percent and fatal injury by 29 percent. One study says that helmet use can reduce the risk of head injury by 85 percent and severe brain injury by 88 percent.
- **Stunning National Reduction.** Nationally, there’s been a 56 percent reduction in bike-related deaths since 1999, during a time when helmet use was more accepted and required by law. But still in 2010 112 children 19 and under died while riding a bike.
- **Save Tax Dollars.** A bike helmet saves \$580 in societal costs, including health care. A Bell Child’s Barbie Roller Girl multi-sport helmet sells for \$19.27 on Amazon.com. More children ages 5 to 14 are sent to emergency rooms in bike incidents than in any other sport.
- **Bike Related Brain Injury is Expensive.** The average cost for a pediatric patient with a traumatic brain injury is over \$20,000. This does not figure in years of life lost, physical or rehabilitative therapy, potential costs in work productivity, or any injury costs related to adults. The investment of a kid’s bike helmet is around \$20.

**Contact:**

**Safe Kids Worldwide Public Policy**

**Anthony Green**

**Director**

**work 202.662.0606 | cell 202.615.4300**

**agreen@safekids.org**

**Roshan Alemi**

**202.662.4471**

**ralemi@safekids.org**

