WHEREAS, the Department of Health advocated in its Hawaii Injury Prevention Plan for 2012-2017 for a universal moped and motorcycle helmet law to increase traffic safety; and

WHEREAS, the Hawaii Injury Prevention Plan for 2012-2017 cited a study that concluded that helmets reduced the risk of death by 42 percent and the risk of head injury by 69 percent for riders involved in an accident; and

WHEREAS, states that have enacted universal helmet laws have seen significant reductions in fatality rates, head injuries and overall medical expenses related to motorcycle injuries, according to a safety guide published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in 2011; and

WHEREAS, a federally mandated universal helmet law was enacted in Hawaii in 1968 and was repealed in 1977. Between 1968 and 1976, motorcycle fatalities in Hawaii decreased by 57 percent. According to a report published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in 2012, there were six motorcycle fatalities per 10,000 registered motorcycles between 1968 and 1976 versus fourteen motorcycle fatalities per 10,000 registered motorcycles prior to 1968 and after the repeal in 1977; and

WHEREAS, states with universal helmet laws, which require all operators and riders to wear safety helmets, have motorcycle rider fatality rates that were 20-40 percent lower than states with partial helmet laws, which require only certain operators and riders to wear safety helmets; and
WHEREAS, Hawaii has a partial helmet statute only requiring riders under the age of eighteen to wear a helmet and between 2005 and 2009 in Hawaii, more than two-thirds (67 percent) of fatally injured motorcycle riders and almost all (96 percent) of fatally injured moped riders were not wearing a helmet at the time of the crash, according to a report published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in 2012; and

WHEREAS, medical costs of helmeted riders average 67 percent lower than that of un-helmeted riders, according to The Queen’s Hospital Financial System data from 2005-2007; and

WHEREAS, the Hawaii Health Information Corporation reported in 2008 that Medicaid, Medicare, and Quest currently pay 22.5 percent of the medical costs for head injuries associated with motorcycle or moped crashes; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation ("DOT") updated its Strategic Highway Safety Plan ("SHSP") for 2013 to 2018 and reported that according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, from 2008 to 2012, nine additional lives per year could have been saved in Hawaii if helmets had been used and the DOT acknowledged that "those who choose not to wear helmets represent the highest cost to the public"; and

WHEREAS, the DOT, in its SHSP, identified motorcycle, scooter, and moped safety as an updated area of emphasis and that one of its policies and strategies is to enact a universal helmet law as such a law would increase traffic safety in Hawaii; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2018, that the DOT is urged to expedite implementation of its strategic goal for motorcycle, motor scooter, and moped safety by submitting legislation for a universal helmet law in Hawaii requiring all operators and riders of motorcycles, motor scooters, mopeds, and bicycles to wear safety helmets by the Regular Session of 2019; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DOT is also urged to consider legislation that would address a requirement to wear a safety helmet securely fastened with a chin strap, and prohibitions on leasing or renting a motorcycle, motor scooter, or bicycle without such a helmet, and recommended fines for violating the safety helmet requirement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Transportation and the Director of Health.

OFFERED BY:

[Signatures]

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