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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR: Godbey DATE TYPED: 3/10/03 HB 911

SHORT TITLE: Require Helmets for Downhill Ski Racing SB _____

ANALYST: Dunbar

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY03	FY04	FY03	FY04		
	NFI				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Responses Received From
Department of Health (DOH)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 911 requires minors participating in any organized downhill ski race competition to wear a certified helmet that meets industry standards. Organizations that allow minors participating in downhill ski racing without a certified helmet meeting industry standards shall be guilty of a petty misdemeanor and conviction shall be sentenced in accordingly.

Significant Issues

Ski racing has inherent and obvious dangers, particularly for minors. Certain sanctioned events by the United States Ski and Snowboard Association already require certified helmet use among participants in competitive downhill skiing events. However, many state and local events may not have such a requirement in place. Helmet use is an effective strategy to prevent severe and fatal traumatic head injury.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1.5 million Americans sustain a Traumatic Brain Injury each year. TBI is the leading cause of death among persons under

the age of 35 years. The CDC also concludes the risk for TBI is highest among adolescents, young adults and those older than 75 years of age. It is estimated that the cost of TBI in the US is \$48.3 billion annually.

As an overall attempt to reduce head injuries the Consumer Product Safety Commission did an evaluation of head injuries associated with snow skiing and snowboarding. The study found 44% of head injuries could be addressed by the use of helmets. For children under 15 years of age 53% of head injuries could be addressed by wearing a helmet. The Department of Industrial Manufacturing Engineering at Rochester Institute of Technology has estimated that helmets could prevent 60 – 80% of skiing head injuries. The American Medical Association concluded that the use of ski helmets would have a great effect in preventing mild concussions in slow speed collisions and reduces the severity of potentially more serious head injuries in high-speed collisions.

Wearing a certified helmet specifically designed for skiing and snowboarding can make a difference in preventing and reducing head injuries from falls and collisions. Encouraging youth to participate in prevention practices would follow to adulthood. Targeting risk behaviors such as non-helmet use will ameliorate youth outcomes threatened by morbidity and mortality due to Traumatic Brain Injuries. In addition to wearing helmets specifically designed for skiing or snowboarding, education of proper helmet use and implications of helmet use and other safe skiing prevention should also be implemented.

DOH indicates that consideration should be given to expanding the provisions of HB 911 bill to require all minors (under the age of 18 years) to wear an appropriate helmet while participating in skiing, snowboarding or sledding on public ski slopes.

ANA/yr