

ACT 130

S.B. NO. 344

A Bill for an Act Relating to Highway Safety.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that skateboard accidents on roadways and streets can result in serious injury to the skateboard user, including head trauma. According to an article published in the *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery*, “Injuries to the Head and Face from Skateboarding: A 10-Year Analysis From National Electronic Injury Surveillance System Hospitals”, from 2009 to 2018, there were an estimated 100,201 emergency room visits nationwide related to trauma to the head and face while skateboarding. The article concluded that “[a] substantial number of [emergency department] visits were a result of skateboarding-related facial trauma. Given the neurologic outcomes of head trauma and functional consequences of facial fractures, especially among adolescents, our findings suggest that injury prevention programs and more aggressive helmet use may be necessary to reduce morbidity and hospitalization”.

The legislature further finds that existing laws in the State protect bicyclists under the age of sixteen by requiring operators to wear a helmet. Additionally, the legislature notes that other states require helmets for minors, including California, New York, and Oregon. Extension of similar safety provisions for bicyclists to skateboard riders will provide additional protection for all roadway users.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the use of a safety helmet by anyone under the age of eighteen while riding a skateboard on public property.

SECTION 2. Chapter 291C, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to part XII to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“§291C- Skateboards; helmet required. (a) No person under eighteen years of age shall operate a skateboard upon a street, roadway, or bikeway, or any other public property, unless the person is wearing a properly fitted and fastened helmet that:

- (1) Is designed to fit the user;
- (2) Is designed to protect against head trauma; and
- (3) Has been tested by a nationally recognized agency, such as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Safety Council, or Children’s Safety Network.

(b) This section shall not be construed to legalize the use of skateboards in violation of any county ordinance.

(c) For the purposes of this section, “skateboard” means a short board that is on wheels that a person stands on to move along a surface or to perform tricks.”

SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.¹

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved May 29, 2025.)

Note

1. Edited pursuant to HRS §23G-16.5.