

ACTION ALERT: Brain Injury Alliance's Board, members, supporters, colleagues, and stakeholders

We need your voice to stop the repeal of the King County bike helmet law. The Board of Health will once again take public testimony on Thursday, Feb 17, 2022 from 1-3 pm, via zoom.

Action Steps

1. Read this email and attachments.
2. Attend the BOH hearing via Zoom on Thursday, Feb 17, 2022 at 1:00-3:00pm.
3. Sign up to speak for the two-minute slot that will be provided. When speaking at the hearing, please share stories with the Board of Health members on how the use of a helmet prevented a bad outcome for you, children, family, or friends.
4. Open the "Rooster of Board of Health Members". Call and email them to voice opposition.
5. Please forward this email and its attachments to your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors throughout King County and ask for them to do Action Steps 1,2,3,4.

Here is the link for the BOH agenda and **directions to sign in:**

<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/board-of-health/agenda.aspx>

For the legal-beagles, here is a link to the actual regulation they seek to repeal:

<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/violence-injury-prevention/traffic-safety/~media/depts/health/board-of-health/documents/code/BOH-Code-Title-9.ashx>

Our priority messages:

- Research shows that people of color are disproportionately injured or killed from bicycle crashes and vehicle-bicycle collisions. Research also shows that low-income neighborhoods and those near major roadways held the highest risk for pediatric bicycle accidents. Use of helmets was extremely low in this population, with high rates of traumatic brain injury. With this information, why has the BOH failed to complete a racial and social justice impact study, a policy required by King County and City of Seattle council members before considering this repeal?
- Investigate enforcement discrimination, advocate for equity enforcement. Don't repeal the bicycle helmet law.
- Repealing a safety law does not address the issue of discriminatory enforcement.
- Let's work together to address discriminatory enforcement at the same time we work to increase helmet access, reduce high-risk intersections, and improve safety education -- community by community.

Background on BIAWA's work to stop the repeal:

In November 2021, our voices helped stop the vote to repeal King County's bike helmet ordinance. Despite our strong and reasoned input, King County is back pushing for a full repeal of the requirement to wear a bike helmet. The repeal covers all bike riders, even children.

Since November, we attempted to work with King County Councilmember Jeanne Kohl-Wells to address the disparity of enforcement against communities of color and the homeless while also addressing the need to prevent preventable brain trauma by wearing helmets. We also had a meeting with King County Councilmember Joe McDermott. He is the incoming chair of the BOH. Unfortunately, he continues to support and lead the push for full repeal of the helmet ordinance, despite our opposition and alternative solutions.

Most recently, we learned that whenever the City of Seattle or King County moves forward on changing regulations that impact issues related to racial and social justice, they are required to do an **impact study** to make sure that communities of color and other stakeholders can provide input on the impact these communities face before changing the laws. It is our understanding that both Seattle and King County have failed to do this. We are now working with civil rights lawyer, Ms. Sheley Anderson, to assist us. For those interested in a deeper dive on this Impact Review, please open the following links.

City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)

Since 3 Seattle City Council Members sit and vote on Board of Health proposals, the RSJI needs to be followed.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84551152364?pwd=cTd2Z1YrajVBQmR4YWpGTjhibUtKZz09>

King Count's Impact Review Tool, which is required to review policy when it impacts equity

<https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/tools-resources.aspx>

Outline of the Equity Impact Review Process

https://kingcounty.gov/~media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/2016/The_Equity_Impact_Review_checklist_Mar2016.ashx?la=en

King County Civil Rights Commission, a subsection of the Equity and Social Justice division of King County

<https://kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/civil-rights/civil-rights-commission.aspx>

Please Review the three PDF documents attached:

1. "BIAWA Talking Points" memo with graphs, illustrations, and research summaries to help us stay on message.
2. "Bike Helmet. Op-Ed letter to *The Seattle Times*" submitted by our research-physician colleagues at Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center (HIPRC)
3. "Dr Ebel's Open Letter to the BOH members"

Sincerely,

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