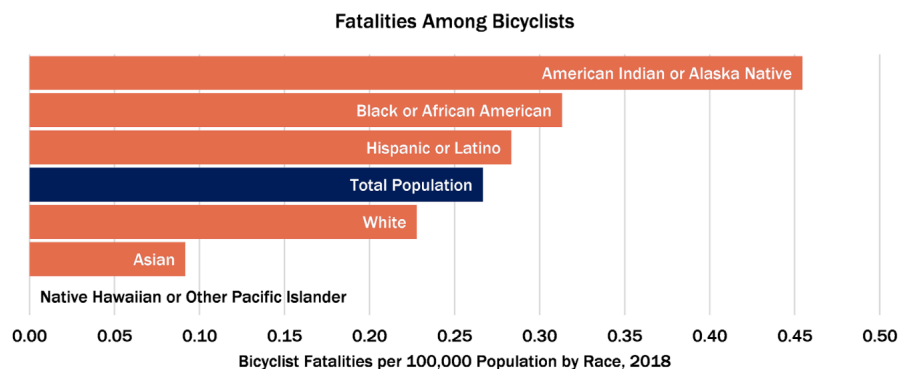


## Talking Points for Opposing Repeal of King County's Bike Helmet Law

- The Board of Health has failed to complete a racial justice impact study of repealing the bicycle helmet law.
- People of color are disproportionately injured or killed from bicycle crashes and vehicle-bicycle collisions.
- Research 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 let's work together to increase helmet access, reduce high-risk intersections, and improve safety education community by community.
- Investigate enforcement discrimination, advocate for equity enforcement. Don't repeal the bicycle helmet law.
- Repealing a safety law does not stop discriminatory enforcement practices .

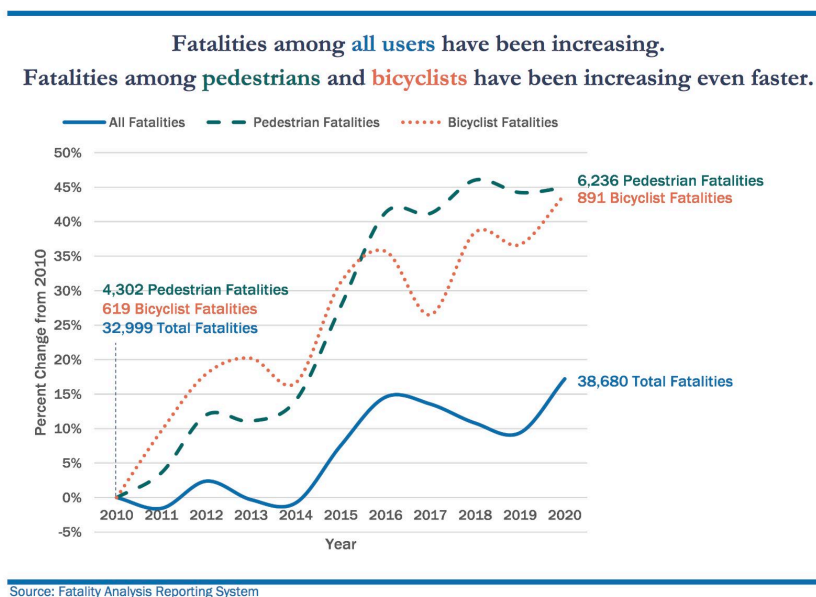
### Data, Graphs, Illustrations, Research Supporting Opposition to Bike Helmet Repeal and Require Impact Studies:



### Source of graph above: *National Roadway Safety Strategy; U.S. Dept. of Transportation*

- Washington's Strategic Highway Safety Plan known as Target Zero, recommends adopting legislation requiring all children wear bicycle helmets and that local jurisdictions adopt laws requiring bicycle helmet use for both adults and children. The report was written collaboratively with the follow state agencies: Governor's Office, WSDOT, WSP, DOL, DOH, Courts, OSPI, HCA, AWC and Association of Counties.
- Since 2020, the Northwest region earned the highest increase of traffic fatalities in the nation, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.
- Washington witnessed a 10 percent increase in traffic fatalities since the pandemic.
- Bicyclists and pedestrians account for 30 percent of traffic fatalities in King County and the number continues to rise.
  - In 2015–2017, 20 percent of all traffic fatalities in our state, and 20 percent of all serious injuries, were people walking or biking, according to the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission.
  - These figures continued to climb in 2018. At 109 fatalities, pedestrian deaths reached their highest number in more than 30 years.
- Why is the King County Board of Health dismissing the research scientists and medical professionals at its own high-level Trauma 1 Center at Harborview Medical who are on record opposing the repeal of the bike helmet law?

- Why has the BOH failed to launch an investigation into discriminatory enforcement?
- Seattle has spent millions of dollars on constructing commuter bike lanes and allowing ride-share bicycles to be rented without helmets. Removing the safety laws around bike helmets while increasing the risk is not sound public policy.
- Address all discriminatory traffic enforcement with action - Invite the Civil Rights division of the Mayor's office and Attorney General's Office to lead this investigation.
- Survivors of traumatic brain injuries require lifelong treatment and support – resources often out of reach for communities of color without taxpayer-supported programs or a legal recourse.
- Why do bike-share companies have special legal protections from people who are seriously injured or killed while using their products?



**Source of graph above: National Roadway Safety Strategy; U.S. Dept. of Transportation**

### **SOLUTIONS: Recommendations for a pro-safety and pro-equity approach**

**Funding for helmets:** We recommend sustained funding for helmets (equipment and training) to increase helmet access and helmet use for communities most harmed by TBI.

**Impact Study Required:** We recommend that the King County Board of Health commission the **required** impact study of the proposed bike helmet repeal to have all communities and stakeholders work together to solve disproportionate racial enforcement with preventing preventable brain injuries.

**Enforcement:** The study of factors associated with helmet availability, helmet use, social determinants of health, and enforcement will require community engagement and leadership to understand how to best enforce the law. Collaboration with communities of color and law enforcement is required to prevent uneven and biased enforcement patterns of the helmet law, and to better understand the relationship between race, ethnicity, gender, helmet use and law enforcement. A pro-safety and pro-equity workgroup should be assembled from all stakeholders in our community to assess and make recommendations on how to eliminate enforcement disparities and improve public health.

