

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2972

To require all equestrian helmets manufactured or sold in the United States meet a minimum safety standard, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 3, 2014

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. CARPER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To require all equestrian helmets manufactured or sold in the United States meet a minimum safety standard, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Christen O’Donnell
5 Equestrian Helmet Safety Act of 2014”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Head injuries are the number one reason
9 for hospital admissions of horseback riders and the

1 leading cause of death following a horseback riding
2 injury.

3 (2) More than 100 deaths per year are esti-
4 mated to result from equestrian related activities,
5 with head injuries accounting for 3 of every 5 of
6 these deaths.

7 (3) Nearly 68,000 people visited an emergency
8 room in 2012 as a result of horseback riding related
9 injuries, with head injuries accounting for 22 per-
10 cent and concussions accounting for 7 percent of
11 these visits.

12 (4) Horseback riding causes 11.7 percent of
13 sports-related traumatic brain injuries, which is the
14 largest percentage of any recreational sport.

15 (5) Between 2001 and 2009, children younger
16 than 19 years of age made 3,638 emergency room
17 visits per year for traumatic brain injuries resulting
18 from horseback riding accidents.

19 (6) Between 75 and 80 percent of head injuries
20 occur while physically mounted on a horse—when a
21 rider would normally be wearing his or her helmet.

22 (7) Racing organizations require helmets, and
23 as a result jockeys now sustain fewer head injuries
24 than pleasure riders.

1 (8) The United States Pony Clubs lowered head
2 injury rates by 29 percent through mandatory hel-
3 met use.

4 (9) Properly fitted ASTM/SEI certified helmets
5 can reduce head injury-related deaths by 70 to 80
6 percent.

7 **SEC. 3. STANDARDS FOR EQUESTRIAN HELMETS.**

8 (a) EQUESTRIAN HELMET DEFINED.—In this sec-
9 tion, the term “equestrian helmet” means a hard shell
10 head covering intended to be worn while participating in
11 an equestrian event or activity.

12 (b) REQUIREMENT.—Every equestrian helmet manu-
13 factured on or after the date that is 270 days after the
14 date of the enactment of this Act shall meet—

15 (1) in the case that the Consumer Product
16 Safety Commission has not established a standard
17 under subsection (c), the ASTM International stand-
18 ard designated as F1163 or successor standard; and

19 (2) in the case that the Commission has estab-
20 lished a standard under subsection (c), the standard
21 established under subsection (c).

22 (c) STANDARD.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Consumer Product
24 Safety Commission may promulgate a standard for
25 equestrian helmets that incorporates all of the re-

1 requirements of the ASTM International standard des-
2 igned as F1163 or successor standard.

3 (2) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN LAWS.—Sec-
4 tions 7 and 9 of the Consumer Product Safety Act
5 (15 U.S.C. 2056 and 2058) shall not apply to the
6 promulgation of a standard under paragraph (1),
7 and section 11 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 2060) shall
8 not apply with respect to any standard promulgated
9 under paragraph (1).

10 (3) STATUS OF STANDARD.—A standard pro-
11 mulgated under paragraph (1) shall be considered a
12 consumer product safety standard promulgated
13 under the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C.
14 2051 et seq.).

15 (d) ENFORCEMENT.—An equestrian helmet subject
16 to subsection (b) that does not meet the applicable stand-
17 ard specified in such subsection shall be considered in vio-
18 lation of a consumer product safety standard promulgated
19 under the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2051
20 et seq.).

21 (e) AUTHORIZATIONS OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
22 is authorized to be appropriated to the Consumer Product
23 Safety Commission to carry out this section, \$500,000 for

- 1 fiscal year 2014, which amount shall remain available
- 2 until expended.

