

Contact:

Jo Linder-Crow, PhD
California Psychological Association
Phone 916-286-7979, ext. 115
Fax 916-286-7971
jlindercrow@cpapsych.org

David Lechuga, Ph.D., ABPP
Phone 949-837-3358
dlechuga@neuroclinic.com

California Psychological
Association
1231 I St.
Suite 204
Sacramento, CA 95814

Press Release

Governor Brown Vetoes Child Protection Legislation

Sacramento, CA September 7, 2011

Yesterday Governor Brown vetoed SB 105 (Yee) which would have mandated helmet use for skiers and snowboarders under the age of 18. SB 105 was authored by child psychologist State Senator Leland Yee and received bi-partisan support in the state legislature.

“We’re astonished that Governor Brown vetoed common sense legislation to protect kids and mirror bike helmet laws,” said Dr. Jo Linder Crow, Executive Director of the California Psychological Association. “The evidence is clear that the use of helmets can greatly reduce the severity of head injuries resulting in a better recovery process. We are very disappointed that the Governor chose to ignore the scientific evidence, the ski industry’s support, and the general widespread support that SB 105 received. “

“Unfortunately, the Governor ignored the pleas of parents who were asking for this law and for a simple tool to help get their kids to wear helmets on the slopes,” said Senator Yee. “California’s ski slopes are perhaps the last area of recreation where we do not have basic safety standards in place for children.”

Multiple studies show that helmets either prevent or mitigate injuries on the slopes. A Federal Consumer Products Safety Commission study has shown that, for children under 15 years of age, 53 percent of head injuries are mitigated by the use of a helmet. Recent studies have also shown that when helmets are used, the incidence of traumatic brain or head injury has been reduced by at least 29 percent.

“Easily preventable concussions or brain injuries will continue to occur,” said Dr. David Lechuga, a neuropsychologist specializing in treating traumatic brain injuries. “Sadly, I will continue to see patients with traumatic brain injuries that could have been either prevented or minimized by SB 105. I am disappointed that the Governor failed to appreciate how his veto will directly compromise the health of our children and adolescents. Frankly, I am unclear what the basis is for the Governor's decision, given the overall support, and lack of strong opposition for this bill.”

Traumatic brain injuries have extraordinary cost for California families and taxpayers. A study by the American Medical Association says that the lifetime cost is as high as \$9 million for those with severe brain injuries.

SB 105 was sponsored by CPA, which is a non-profit professional organization of over 5,000 members in California. California’s psychologists currently work in private practice, hospitals, government agencies, university and research settings, schools, community clinics, and businesses.

CPA sponsored identical legislation in 2010, which was signed by prior Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. However, because that legislation was joined to another bill regulating ski industry safety that Gov. Schwarzenegger vetoed, it did not become operative.