

Use of ski helmets, metal bats may be regulated by government

Publisher's note: *This editorial is from the April 2, 2010, Santa Rosa Press Democrat.*

Two safety-related bills now making their way through the state Legislature are being viewed as either examples of exemplary caution or inexplicable nannyism.

While we understand the sentiment of those wanting to protect free choice, we see these bills – one we support and one we oppose – as examples of legislators acting with legitimate concern, not acting like Mary Poppins.

The first is Senate Bill 880 by state Sen. Leland Yee, D-San Francisco, which would require minors to wear a helmet while skiing or snowboarding. The legislation is in response to the many head injuries that occur due to collisions on the slopes involving skiers and/or snowboarders. At the main trauma center in Lake Tahoe, doctors report seeing at least one a day. A study by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission found that 53 percent of the ski and snowboard injuries suffered by children under 15 could have been prevented or would have been less severe had they been wearing a helmet.

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