

A Little X-tra News

Vertical Motorcycle License Plate Bill Clears PA House

Legislation allowing the vertical display of registration plates on motorcycles was recently passed by the state House and now heads to the Senate for consideration.

House Bill 1060 is sponsored by state Rep. Mark Keller (R-86). "This legislation is specific to motorcycles," explained Rep. Keller. "Currently, the state vehicle code does not specify how a vehicle registration plate may be mounted. However, regulations in Title 67 of the Pennsylvania Code require horizontal mounting of vehicle registration plates and do not give the option for vertical mounting."

HB 1060 would also "authorize the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to produce, upon request, registration plates for motorcycles which display the identifying characters in a vertical alignment."

"Owners of custom-made or vintage motorcycles are sometimes reluctant to mount the registration plate horizontally on the rear fender because doing so interferes with the custom paint job or other custom work done on the cycle," according to Keller. "Many of these owners have approached ABATE of Pennsylvania, the motorcycle advocacy group, about making this legislative change, and ABATE supports my legislation."

More Rules Proposed For Canadian Riders

Saskatchewan is considering more requirements for new motorcycle licensees, supervision for new riders and the possibility of mandatory gear. The ideas are among more than a dozen changes to motorcycle safety, training and insurance rules proposed by Saskatchewan Government Insurance as it looks for ways to reduce claims, save money and quell the roar of angry riders.

One suggestion is for potential riders to pass a basic skills test or complete a motorcycle training program before they're issued a learner's license. New riders who don't take the training courses could see an additional \$500 a year fee or be restricted on the size of the bike they use.

Helmets and eye protection are currently the law in Saskatchewan and similar rules apply across the country, but no other jurisdiction in Canada has mandatory rules for wearing gloves, ankle-covering boots or clothing that cover arms and legs, according to SGI.

The review was launched earlier this year after a proposed rate increase which would have seen insurance costs for motorcycles go up by an average of 73% to cover a \$9 million gap between what SGI takes in from motorcyclists in fees versus what is paid out for collisions.


The public has until the end of July to comment on the proposals and SGI is to report to the government in the fall. The goal is to have the new rules in place for next year's riding season.

Motorcycle Checkpoints In New York Net Nearly A Hundred Tickets

More than 80 motorcyclists and their vehicles were checked by specially-trained State Police motorcycle inspectors near Buffalo, NY in mid-June, with two checkpoints resulting in the issuance of 92 traffic tickets for offenses that included helmet and equipment violations.

New York has been the epicenter for the Motorcycle-Only Checkpoint debate, which has resulted in four states; New Hampshire, North Carolina, Virginia and California, passing laws to prohibit law enforcement agencies from establishing motorcycle-only checkpoints.

In addition, on the federal level Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) has introduced H.R. 1861 "To stop motorcycle checkpoint funding," and also contains language "to force the DOT to focus motorcycle safety efforts on crash prevention programs, not national helmet mandates."



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