

News For Thought



Las Vegas Clubs Sue Over Police Harassment

A group of Nevada motorcycle clubs is suing Metro Police, accusing the Las Vegas police department of violating the constitutional rights of bikers. The Confederation of Clubs and Scoundrels Pub filed the lawsuit Wednesday, January 11, claiming that "The police are interfering with private business and telling private businesses that they cannot allow certain motorcycle clubs inside their private businesses."

Their attorney says Metro Police officers harassed bikers and threatened to pull liquor licenses at local biker bars, like Scoundrels, based solely on the businesses' clientele.

The lawsuit includes a letter Metro PD sent to Scoundrels Pub last June that states an event involving the Vagos Motorcycle Club violated Clark County code and could put the pub's liquor license at risk.

"We've not asked for a penny. We don't want money. We just want to get recognition of the situation and get the Metro Police Department to give us our constitutional rights. That's all we're asking for," said Bandido Motorcycle Club Las Vegas President Rich Novicelli in an interview with CBS-affiliate 8NewsNow. Metro declined to comment.

Similarly, McHugh found the local ordinance to be "in direct conflict" with state law and ruled the town of North Hampton "is hereby prohibited from adopting or enforcing the ordinance."

In granting the permanent injunction, the judge noted in his decision that the N.H. House of Representatives' Transportation Committee rejected a bill to enact a law that was similar to the North Hampton ordinance.

McHugh also noted that the town administrator was notified by the federal Environmental Protection Agency that it does not grant cities and towns "any additional authority to control environmental noise beyond that available to them under state and local law."

House Bill 1442 has since been introduced in an attempt to lower the state's motorcycle noise limit to the federal standard of 80 dB and would require that any motorcycle brought in for servicing to have EPA-compliant mufflers installed at that time. Similar measures have failed to pass three times in the past four years due to what the bill's sponsor calls "fierce" opposition from the powerful motorcycle lobby.

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First Motorcycle-Only Gas Station Opens Abroad

More motorcycles are sold in Indonesia in a year than exist in the entire United States of America! According to the Indonesian Motorcycle Industry Association (AISI), 7.4 million motorcycles were sold there in 2010, and by comparison there were 7.9 million motorcycles registered in

the U.S.

There are significantly more motorcycles than cars operating in this densely-populated region, and of 70.71 million vehicles in Indonesia, 52.43 million are two-wheel machines, which has led to the opening of the world's first motorcycle-only gas stations.

These "Shell Motor Express" stations are designed exclusively for motorcycles and it was the Indonesian government's idea to provide "comfort, safety and time-efficiency" for the majority of the country's commuters.

Shell Indonesia says: "This motorcycle gas station is a pilot project developed in response to the Government's idea to provide a dedicated refueling service for motorcycles. Shell Motor Express is purposely built to serve motorcycles which are the largest and fastest growing segment in the domestic motor vehicle industry."

Judge Bars N.H Towns From Enacting Stricter Noise Laws

New Hampshire cities and towns cannot impose limits on motorcycle noise that are stricter than what state law allows, a Rockingham County judge has ruled.

"If each town in New Hampshire had the authority to enact different noise emission ordinances, the state would be subject to a checkerboard pattern of laws," ruled Superior Court Judge Kenneth McHugh on Dec. 9. "For example, a motorcyclist who complies with the state noise emission limit could be precluded from driving through a town because that town enacted a lower noise emission limit than the state."

The judge's decision comes in response to a lawsuit filed by the Seacoast Harley-Davidson dealership, which filed suit against the town of North Hampton, successfully arguing the town did not have legal authority to adopt its own motorcycle noise ordinance.

North Hampton adopted a noise ordinance at a May 2010 Town Meeting, requiring all motorcycles operated in the town to have exhaust noise limited to 80 decibels. State law permits motorcycles to reach 106 dB.

After the ordinance passed, the local police chief refused to enforce the ordinance, describing it as unconstitutional and explaining that law enforcement and the town could face legal action if they enforced a lower noise threshold than state law allows.

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Motorcyclists Fined For Wearing DOT Approved Helmets

In a strange twist, motorcycle riders in Mumbai, India are being hassled by law enforcement for wearing DOT-approved helmets because, in an effort to curb the use of cheap helmets, the police commissioner recently issued an order stating that all motorcyclists must wear helmets with an ISI marking to certify that they are approved by the Bureau of Indian Standards.

So, despite wearing some of the finest helmets in the world, with certifications from the U.S. Department of Transportation which subjects helmets to higher standards of testing, police are issuing tickets to safety-conscious riders for wearing "unapproved helmets".

In typical bureaucratic fashion, authorities have reportedly forwarded an application for recognizing DOT-certified helmets to the transport department "which is the competent authority to make an appropriate decision."

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Weird News: Dirty Secret About Gas Pumps

Gas pump handles top a recent study of filthy surfaces, so just when you thought filling up couldn't hurt any more, medical researchers have announced another reason to avoid touching the gas pump: GERMS!

Gas pump handles turned out to be the filthiest surface that Americans encounter on the way to work, according to a study released on October 25, 2011 by Kimberly-Clark Professional, a unit of personal hygiene giant Kimberly-Clark Corp. A team of hygienists swabbed hundreds of surfaces around six U.S. cities to see what everyday objects are breeding grounds for the worst bacteria and viruses.

The top offenders, following gas pumps, were handles on public mailboxes, escalator rails and ATM buttons. Closely following on the filthiest

list were parking meters and kiosks, crosswalk buttons and buttons on vending machines in shopping malls.

"It comes down to the fact that nobody cleans the things that you're going to touch on a daily basis," said Dr. Kelly Arehart, program leader of Kimberly-Clark's Healthy Workplace Project.

QUOTABLE QUOTE:

"Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it, diagnosing it incorrectly and applying the wrong remedies."

~ Groucho Marx (1890-1977) American comedian and film star

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