

# News For Thought



## No Emissions Testing for Pima County, Arizona Motorcycles

Owners of more than 6,200 motorcycles in Pima County, in which Tucson is located, will soon no longer have to worry about whether their vehicles can pass the state's emissions tests, but the 22,000 motorcycles registered in Maricopa County, where the city of Phoenix is located, remains one of the only places in the U.S. where motorcycles must pass emission testing.

Both areas of the state have had testing programs for years to comply with federal air-quality rules, particularly as they relate to carbon monoxide and ozone pollution. State legislators voted for the exemption in 2005, but the law was contingent on getting the required approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency -- that order came December 15th as the EPA agreed that exempting the motorcycles from the testing in Pima County will not harm air quality in the Tucson region.

"This is a big step in the right direction," said Bobbi Hartmann, a lobbyist for the motorcyclist groups in Arizona and a member of the National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM) Legislative Task Force.

Motorcycle groups such as ABATE of Arizona, the Modified Motorcycle Association (MMA) of Arizona and the Arizona Confederation of Motorcycle Clubs had backed the legislation, hoping to get their vehicles exempted from what they call unfair and unnecessary emissions regulation. State records had shown that 26 percent of the motorcycles taking the test failed while cars flunked at the rate of 16 percent. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## Pelosi Targets Grassroots Lobbying

House Speaker-to-be Nancy Pelosi (D.-Calif.) has pledged to take up a lobbying reform proposal that would impose new regulations on speech by grassroots organizations (such as motorcycle rights organizations), while providing a loophole in the rules for large corporations and labor unions.

The legislation would make changes to the legal definition of "grassroots lobbying" and require any organization that encourages 500 or more members of the general public to contact their elected representatives to file a report with detailed information about their organization to the government on a quarterly basis.

The report would include identifying the organization's expenditures, the issues focused on and the members of Congress and other federal officials who are the subject of the advocacy efforts. A separate report would be required for each policy issue the group is active on.

"Right now, grassroots groups don't have to report at all if they are communicating with the public," said Dick Dingman of the Free Speech Coalition, Inc. "This is an effort that would become a major attack on the 1st Amendment."

The Lobbying Transparency and Accountability Act, which made some of these changes, was actually approved by both the House and the Senate in the 109th Congress, but failed to make it through a conference committee. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## UK Licensing Plan for all Motorcycles

A plan to crackdown on teenage motorcyclists plaguing estates and shopping centers was unveiled by Labour MP Chris Bryant, who wants to bring in a new law calling for all bikes - including off-road scramblers and mini-motorbikes - to be forced to have license plates.

Many of the bikes used by hooligans to terrorize others are unlicensed as they are officially classified as off-road machines, he said. Police are reluctant to chase them fearing riders could be thrown off and be killed or injured. But Mr Bryant believes by putting number plates on bikes officers would know who owns the vehicles and track them down.

He told the London Mirror that, "Unlicensed so-called 'off-road' bikes are a lethal nuisance. The racket they make and the danger they pose to pedestrians and drivers means it's time we licensed them." Sales of mini-motorcycles, which can go up to 60mph, have soared ten-fold since 2002, to 100,000 last year. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## Salt Lake City Playing Head Games

The Mayor of Salt Lake City, Utah has proposed a municipal ordinance that would implement a city-wide helmet law for all motorcyclists and bicyclists, though the state of Utah does not mandate helmets for adult riders.

The proposed ordinance reads in part: 12.24.130 Motorcycle or motor-driven cycle - - Protective headgear -- Closed cab excepted -- Electric assisted bicycles, motor assisted scooters, personal motorized mobility devices.

A. A person may not operate or ride on a motorcycle or motor-driven cycle on a street, highway or public park unless the person is wearing protective headgear which complies with specifications adopted under Subsection (C). The Salt Lake City Weekly newspaper had this to say about the helmet law: "City Hall is on the verge of proposing a helmet law that would make Salt Lake City one of the few cities in the country requiring that all bicycle-riding adults don a safety helmet. "The proposal also applies to motorcycles; small, motorized

scooters and the Segway, that two-wheeled platform President George W. Bush fell off. Skateboarders, however, would be spared. "The city's smokers rolled over for the ban on lighting up on golf courses and in public squares, but bike riders might not be so complacent." ABATE of Utah is requesting that riders contact Mayor Rocky Anderson and voice your opposition to this legislation. You can contact Mayor Anderson by phone: (801) 535-7704, by e-mail: [mayor@slc.gov](mailto:mayor@slc.gov) or by letter: 451 South State St., Room 306, SLC, UT 84111. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## Oklahoma Bill would Reduce Motorcycle Tolls

An Oklahoma state lawmaker is proposing giving a break to motorcycle riders on the state's turnpikes. State Representative Paul Wesselhoft says it's not fair for motorcyclists to pay the same price as a car on the toll roads because motorcycles cause less wear and tear on the roadway. And he says the bikes cause less pollution and are more fuel-efficient.

His proposal calls for motorcycles to be charged half the toll currently charged to two-axle vehicles such as cars and SUVs. Rep. Wesselhoft says he doubts the state would lose any revenue by reducing the toll because he believes more bikers would drive the turnpikes if the toll were lower.

Rep. Paul Wesselhoft (R-Moore, OK) has been coordinating with ABATE of Oklahoma regarding advancing this legislation, which ABATE of Oklahoma's State Board has voted to fully support. ABATE contacted the Central Oklahoma HOG Chapter to provide a Harley for a photo-op for Rep. Wesselhoft, who has prior motorcycling experience, to introduce his proposal to the media.

"We appreciate Representative Wesselhoft's decision to introduce this measure, which will be beneficial both to our state and to improving motorcycling Quality of Life in Oklahoma," said Tiger Mike Revere, State Coordinator of ABATE of Oklahoma and a member of the National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM) Board of Directors. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

Bees mistake motorcycle cushion for real flowers. Vivid flowers on a cushion used by a woman for her motorcycle were so lifelike that hundreds of bees attempted to collect honey from it, the China Daily newspaper reported. Seeing so many bees flying over the motorcycle, parked at a village near Shenyang of Liaoning Province, the rider was scared out of her wits and cried for help. She was rescued from the spot only after fire fighters were called in to drive the bees away. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

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