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ROLLING THUNDER - RUN TO THE WALL

As they have for the past 14 years, motorcyclists from Wisconsin met in Milwaukee Thursday morning, May 25th for the Run to the Wall to join with Rolling Thunder in Washington, D.C. Roughly 100 bikes, most with passengers, arrived in Washington, D.C. Saturday in order to join 500,000 bikers at the Viet Nam Memorial Wall on Memorial Day 2006.

The Wisconsin group met at 37th and Wisconsin in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at the law firm of Eisenberg, Weigel, Carlson, Blau & Clemens who have sponsored the Wisconsin group for the past 14 years; providing tolls; road captains; organization; chase and tow vehicles; motels; and a Hawaiian party in Washington, D.C.

People along the route from the law firm to the I-94 on ramp waved and cheered; including 700 school children waving American flags. This was especially heart warming for the 200 bikers; and a lesson in the real meaning of Memorial Day for the school children. Some bikers join the group initially to show their support; but drop out short of the Illinois border.

Anyone interested in joining the Run to the Wall trip to Washington, D.C. to join with Rolling Thunder on Memorial Day 2007 can contact Ken "Polack" Pezewski at the law firm 1-800-486-0106.



VA Hospital Chaplain giving the blessing.



Attorney Joe Weigel thanking the riders and speakers for coming to the event.



Parade escort by Milwaukee's finest.



Bikers taking in the information.



Pledge of Allegiance & National Anthem



Ladies passing out event T-shirts and information packets.



Last minute road & safety instructions.



Donuts, coffee and juice to get the day started.

New Motorcycle Legislation signed by Doyle

Last month I gave a run down on what ABATE is about and what we've done for bikers over the last 32 years. Tiger told me I shouldn't go into so much detail and just get to the facts. So, this month I'll try to be brief without selling you short about what ABATE has done for you lately.

Roadway Users Responsibility Act was signed by Gov. Doyle on May 26th. This Act will be come law and take effect on Oct.1, 2006. Unless you are a member of ABATE of Wisconsin Inc, you probably haven't heard much about this bill. So, pay attention, I'm going to lay it out for you. This law will:

Allow motorcyclists to proceed through a vehicle actuated red light after 45 seconds when the signal fails to recognize the motorcycle. This doesn't mean we can all blow through red lights and it's legal. But when you come to a stoplight that won't change unless a cage is behind you and there's not one in sight, you will be able to go through it after 45 seconds as if it were a two way stop sign or flashing red. A lot of safety Nazis aren't happy about this one because they think we're all going to jump out in front of cars while running reds and everyone's insurance will go up because all bikers are brainless idiots. I think it was needed, and with responsible use, this will be a big help to all second shifters and late night riders.

Increases the penalties for right of way violations. You may not even know this, but until now unless a cager was drunk or acting in severe disregard the penalty for injuring a biker was less than \$100. ABATE has worked to increase this to up to a \$1000 fine and a license suspension. We would have loved to have had jail time included in this, but with that provision the entire bill would have been stalled early. I'd like to add that this is in line with the AMA's Justice for All campaign, although I don't remember any AMA representation at any committee hearings or even a mention of it in their monthly magazine. This one was all ABATE and a few rights dedicated bikers.

Will require that Share the Road, a motorcycle awareness class, be taught in all driver education classes in the state. ABATE has developed and has been voluntarily teaching Share the Road in drivers ed classes for several years. Until now, it was optional for teachers to include motorcycle awareness curriculum and many chose not to because of either contempt for bikers, or lack of knowledge of the subject. The old saying "I didn't see him" is becoming just that, old. Young drivers need to be told where to look for us and what to expect if they are to safely share the road with us. Education is a big part of what ABATE of Wisconsin Inc does, so if this interests you, be sure to contact us about how you can help.

Require that a person who violates the right of way of a motorcyclist and causes a crash to attend a Share the Road class. Drunk drivers have had to attend special

classes and victim testimonies for years, so I think this is the least we can require some one to do if they don't find it important enough to take the time to look for bikers.

Allow a graduate of the basic rider course (BRC) obtain a motorcycle endorsement without holding an instruction (learners) permit. This is another one that seems like common sense, but let me clarify. When a new rider takes a state certified basic rider course they start with classroom instruction and then move onto actual hands on motorcycle training. When they successfully complete the course, they have earned their license. No test is required at a DMV testing station. Until now, when you passed the BRC you had to go up to the window at the DMV and pay for a learners permit (which you didn't need because you already passed the test) and then went right back up to the window to pay for an M endorsement on your license. One too many times paying if you already paid for a safety course. This law will make it so you can take your completion certificate right to the window and pay for an M endorsement.

This legislation amounts to two years of hard work by ABATE of Wisconsin Inc members and we should all thank the legislators who stood up and introduced this bill. Senator Dave Zien introduced the bill in the Senate after careful consideration of the things ABATE felt necessary and long overdue in Wisconsin. Representative Don Pridemore then introduced the bill in the Assembly where it passed in the last hour of the last day that they were in session earlier this year.

ABATE of Wisconsin Inc will be monitoring the implementation of this act and I will be glad to update you further as the need arises. If you feel like you could do something more to be involved in your rights as a biker, or would like more information about the laws that concern you, please contact our state office to join (1-800-386-4442), or check out our website at www.abatewis.org. A Brotherhood Against Totalitarian Enactments is a volunteer organization run by dedicated bikers that believe we all deserve freedom of the road. Until next month... Ride Free.