

Bikers Inside the Beltway 2012

Thursday, May 17th, 2012 was the 4th annual Michael "Boz" Kerr Bikers Inside the Beltway event in Washington, DC. The event is a national lobby day, sponsored by the Motorcycle Riders Foundation, for motorcyclists to come to Capitol Hill to meet with their elected officials and brief them on all issues affecting motorcyclists at the federal level.

This year's event drew hundreds of motorcyclists from 17 States and met with almost 250 elected officials.

One of the top issues the attendees were lobbying for was asking their members of Congress to work the HR 904 language into the now conferenced highway legislations. HR 904 is the bill to prohibit federal funding of motorcycle-only roadside checkpoints.

During the Congressional Panel portion of the day, the group of riders gathered in a Ways and Means Committee room to hear from a select group of Members of Congress. Addressing the group was Congressman Burgess, the Motorcycle Safety Caucus co-chair, along with his colleagues in the House of Representatives: Alan West-FL, Scott Rigell-VA, Jon Runyan-NJ, Bob Dold-IL, Todd Young-IN, Richard Hanna-NY, Erik Paulsen-MN, and Adam Kinsinger-IL. The MRF thanks all of the Members of Congress who attended the event.

Coinciding with Bikers Inside the Beltway week, Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner ran an op-ed in the daily paper, "Roll Call" urging conferees on the highway bill to include language from HR 904.

Sensenbrenner said "May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month and we welcome motorcyclists from across the country to Washington for 'Bikers Inside the Beltway' week. During this week, Congress should be reminded that effective motorcycle safety can help keep all of us safer on the road, but efforts to expand a government program that arbitrarily roadblocks law-abiding motorcyclists are a misguided, ineffective use of taxpayer funds."

This year's event received media attention in both the print and online editions of "Politico", a Washington, DC daily paper and website.

Thanks to all who attended and to those who helped support those who attended. This year was a tremendous success.

Legal Battle Continues Against Motorcycle Roadblocks

Although the first round in the battle that the law firm of Proner & Proner is waging on behalf of motorcyclists to prevent the New York State Police and other agencies from conducting motorcycle-only checkpoints was won by the police, A.I.M. (Aid to Injured Motorcyclists) Attorney Mitchell Proner believes the judge's ruling overlooked the evidence that motorcyclists were targeted for reasons other than safety.

The challenged checkpoints were set up in proximity to well known motorcycle events. Motorcyclists traveling to those events were forced off the roadway by the police, regardless of any individualized suspicion, and compelled to undergo inspections. Although the inspections were termed "safety" inspections, the majority of tickets issued at the checkpoints were for violations unrelated to safety and the prevention of motorcycle accidents.

The attorneys of Proner and Proner are appealing the District Court decision to the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals. On March 21, 2012, Mitch Proner filed a lengthy brief arguing that the checkpoints clearly constitute an unreasonable search and seizure under the Fourth Amendment. Oral argument will probably take place this fall with a decision soon thereafter.

Proner has vowed to take the fight all the way to the Supreme Court if necessary. As a rider himself and a trial lawyer, Proner is intent on defending the rights of all riders who are being unfairly targeted. "Our right to be free from unreasonable seizures was a gift from our founding fathers which must be defended regardless of personal cost."

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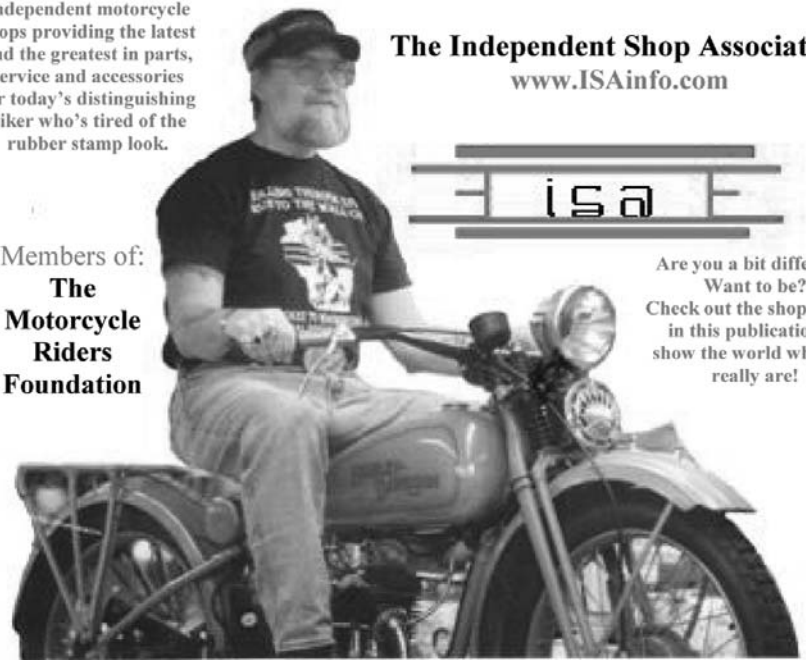
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