

News For Thought



ABATE of Michigan Requests Your Immediate Action

This urgent Call To Action is on behalf of ABATE of Michigan, requesting the help of all motorcyclists in their fight for freedom.

"Senate Bill 291 passed the Michigan Senate in late June," writes ABATE President Vince Consiglio. "We are asking all rights activists to send a post card to Michigan's Governor, Rick Snyder, urging him to support motorcycle helmet choice for adults." Consiglio further advises that; "A postcard from a 'FREE' state may help him realize that Michigan loses motorcycle money every day of the summer with a mandatory helmet law. Governor Snyder prides himself on being all about business and helping business. Please urge Governor Snyder to support adult choice." MAIL to: Governor Rick Snyder, State Capital, P.O. Box 30013, Lansing, MI 48909 or call (517) 373-3400 or e-mail Rick.Snyder@michigan.gov.

Michigan is one of 20 states with a mandatory helmet law for all riders, but before the state legislature broke for the summer the Senate voted 24-14 on June 28th to repeal their 40-year old helmet requirement for motorcyclists 21 or older, who have been riding for at least two years or passes a safety test, and have \$100,000 in personal injury insurance. A sunset provision would cause the ban on helmetless riding to resume in five years, unless the legislature acts again. The heavily-amended measure now moves to the House of Representatives for further action. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

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NHTSA (again) Pushes Helmet Laws

NHTSA Administrator David Strickland has testified once again before a Congressional committee urging federal action to get motorcyclists to wear helmets. On July 27, during a reauthorization hearing on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Strickland told a subcommittee

of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation that "the most important step we can take to reduce the deaths of motorcyclists on our roads and highways is to assure that all riders wear a DOT compliant helmet."

He further stated that, "A grant program emphasizing the use of motorcycle helmets would be effective in reducing fatalities."

Last year, in response to Congressional testimony from Strickland that increased helmet use is the core component of NHTSA's motorcycle safety plan, U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) introduced a resolution urging NHTSA to concentrate on motorcycle crash prevention and rider education instead of lobbying for helmet laws. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

Nigeria Bans Motorcycles in Terror-Struck City

Officials in Maiduguri, Nigeria's seventh largest city and capital of northeastern Borno State, has banned motorbikes in a bid to curb militant activities borne on the backs of these ubiquitous vehicles.

Motorcycles and Okada (motorcycle taxis) are the predominant mode of transportation in the mostly impoverished city, and members of the Motorcycle Transport Union have protested the ban on their livelihood, but the Borno State government is desperate to crack down on Boko

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Haram, an extremely orthodox Islamist sect that is seeking to overthrow the secular government in favor of a Muslim state. The terrorist group has become known for brazen public attacks conducted while riding motorbikes, and has killed at least 40 people including police officers and politicians in drive-by motorbike attacks. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

Safest State To Ride

According to a statistical analysis from TheStreet.com financial website, the safest state to ride in is North Dakota, with a fatality rate nearly a third the national average, low levels of congestion and high quality road surfaces.

In an article "The Safest States for Motorcycles" in the August 1st Business Section, writer Greg Emerson points out that, "The truth is that motorcycle riding is up. Way up. Between 1996 and 2005, motorcycle registrations increased 61% while vehicle miles traveled of motorcycles grew only 8.6%, according to the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. That means a lot of new riders, riding not very far or not very often."

In an effort to "help keep all those weekend warriors looking to get on a bike and go riding from losing their heads, we looked at the most recent fatality data -- from 2009 -- to determine which states were the safest for the aspiring Evel Knievels among us. We ranked all 50 states and the District of Columbia to see which ones had the smallest proportion of motorcycle deaths as a proportion of total traffic deaths."

Half of the states fall below the national average of 15.4%, and half above. Here are the 10 states with the lowest ratio of rider fatalities:

Tenth-safest: Vermont - Motorcyclist fatalities: 68; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 11.8%

Eighth-safest (tie): Virginia - Motorcyclist fatalities: 671; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 11.5%

Eighth-safest (tie): Kentucky - Motorcyclist fatalities: 745; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 11.5%

Seventh-safest: Missouri - Motorcyclist fatalities: 806; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 10.8%

Sixth-safest: Wyoming - Motorcyclist fatalities: 129; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 10.1%

Fifth-safest: Alabama - Motorcyclist fatalities: 776; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 9.8%

Fourth-safest: West Virginia - Motorcyclist fatalities: 334; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 7.5%

Third-safest: Mississippi - Motorcyclist fatalities: 632; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 7.4%

Second-safest: Nebraska - Motorcyclist fatalities: 211; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 7.1%

Safest: North Dakota - Motorcyclist fatalities: 135; Proportion of total vehicle deaths: 5.2% www.ON-A-BIKE.com

President Obama Signs Repeal Of Kids' Motorcycle Ban

President Barack Obama signed a bipartisan consumer safety bill on August 12 that exempts youth-sized motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) from the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) of 2008 that bans children's products that contain lead.

H.R. 2715, introduced by U.S. Representatives Mary Bono Mack (R-CA) and G.K. Butterfield (D-NC), passed near-unanimously in the House 421-2 on Aug. 1 and was approved by unanimous consent by the Senate later that day. The measure excludes kids' off-road vehicles from the overly-broad CPSIA lead certification rules, which previously prohibited their sale due to lead content of components such as batteries and brakes.

"This law is a win-win for American consumers and the American economy," said Congresswoman Bono Mack, "and I thank the President for signing this critically important bill into law."

Be sure to contact your federal legislators and thank them for rectifying the onerous "Lead Law" bike ban, and for supporting the rights of millions of off-road enthusiasts and future motorcyclists. www.ON-A-BIKE.com

QUOTABLE QUOTE: "Useless laws weaken the necessary laws."

Charles de Montesquieu (1689-1755), French philosopher and political thinker

I personally want to thank Bill Bish of Ridin' On Magazine www.ridinon.com out of the Ohio area for working so hard putting together all the news that we enjoy reading. Thanks brother for what you do for us bikers throughout the country.

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