



Motorcycle Riders Foundation

P.O. Box 250, Highland, IL 62249

(202) 546-0983 / mrffoffice@mrf.org / www.mrf.org

What is the Motorcycle Riders Foundation?

Founded in 1985, the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) provides leadership at the federal level for state motorcyclists' rights organizations as well as motorcycle clubs and individual riders. The MRF is chiefly concerned with issues at the national and international levels that impact the freedom and safety of American street motorcyclists. The MRF is committed to being a national advocate for the advancement of motorcycling and its associated lifestyle and works in conjunction with our partners to help educate elected officials and policymakers in Washington and beyond. Through its network of over 250,000 motorcyclists the MRF is dedicated to being the "voice of the street rider in Washington, D.C."



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MOTORCYCLIST ADVISORY COUNCIL REAUTHORIZATION ACT: H.R. 2141

Background:

The Motorcyclist Advisory Council (MAC) is responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration concerning infrastructure issues related to motorcyclist safety including barrier design; road design, construction, and maintenance practices; and the architecture and implementation of intelligent transportation system technologies. Representative Mike Gallagher (WI) has introduced a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the MAC after its current term expires in 2021.

MRF Position:

The MAC provides the U.S. Department of Transportation expert first-hand knowledge of motorcycle issues. The MAC serves as the only official forum for the motorcycle community to have an open dialogue with the federal government to discuss concerns with infrastructure design, issues with automated vehicles, and other areas of safety affecting motorcyclists on the road. It is important to have road designers, engineers and stakeholders convene and review best practices to prevent tragic accidents and make motorcycling safer for everyone. Motorcyclists deserve a seat at the table when issues impacting them are being discussed.

Request:

Cosponsor H.R. 2141 and support efforts to include preservation of the MAC in the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization bill.



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PASS THE MOTORCYCLIST ANTI-PROFILING RESOLUTION: H. Res 366

Background:

Responsible and law-abiding motorcyclists across the country continue to report instances of being harassed and singled out by law enforcement simply because they are riding a motorcycle or wearing motorcycle-related apparel. In fact, according to a recently conducted national survey, over thirty percent of respondents felt they had been profiled by law enforcement despite not committing any traffic infractions. Instances were reported in all 50 states and also shows a growing national trend when compared with similar surveys conducted since 2014.

In December of 2018 the United States Senate passed, by unanimous consent, a resolution on this issue. The 116th Congress version of this House resolution had 139 bipartisan cosponsors.

This year Representative Walberg (R-MI) introduced an identical resolution in the House, H. Res 366.

MRF Position:

We believe, that through education and awareness, this issue can be addressed and mitigated. The Motorcycle Riders Foundation has worked with federal lawmakers in getting a national, bipartisan resolution introduced to address this critical issue. This resolution promotes public awareness of motorcyclist profiling and encourages collaboration and communication between law enforcement and the motorcycle community. Further, the legislation urges state law enforcement officials to condemn the profiling of motorcyclists in written policies and training materials.

The House of Representatives should join their colleagues in the Senate and go on record about the need to end the profiling of motorcyclists.

Request:

Support the motorcyclist profiling resolution and the motorcycle community by signing on as a co-sponsor to H. Res 366.



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HIGHWAY BILL

Background:

Congress has a September 30, 2021 deadline to pass a surface transportation reauthorization bill (aka the highway bill). In 2020 the House passed its version that included motorcycle specific provisions on topics like automated vehicles, motorcycle only check points and advisory boards. These provisions were included with bipartisan support.

MRF Position:

The highway bill is a vital part of our transportation policy making system. The opportunity to dramatically impact our surface transportation system comes around only once every five years. Using this legislative vehicle to include important motorcycle specific priorities is a must. The House wisely included many of these provisions during committee markup in 2020. The Motorcycle Riders Foundation is encouraged by the work of the House in 2020 and seeks continued support for motorcyclists in any permanent bill.

Request:

Support the inclusion of motorcycle specific language in the 2021 highway bill that will ensure motorcyclists are treated fairly in all federal policy.

Specific policies include:

Where applicable 2020 Highway Bill sections listed

- Preserving the Motorcycle Education & Awareness Program Grant Funding. (Sec. 3001)
- Preserving the ban on federal funding for motorcycle only checkpoints. (Sec. 3011)
- Preserving the Motorcyclist Advisory Council (MAC) to advise the FHWA. (Sec. 3013)
- Preserving language that collects motorcyclist profiling data. (Sec. 3505)
- Preserving mandate that autonomous vehicles must detect and respond to motorcycles. (Sec. 5304)
- Preserving the NHTSA Lobbying Ban and expand to other federal agencies.
- Preserving the language that motorcycles are not considered single-occupancy vehicles for HOV lane access.
- Ensure that motorcycles are not banned from federally funded roads.



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REEXAMINING THE DEFINITION OF A MOTORCYCLE

Background:

Currently the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) defines the term “motorcycle,” for the purpose of the statute and regulations it administers, as “a motor vehicle with motive power having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with ground” (49 CFR 571.3). This has not been revised or amended since initially defined back in 1967.

In recent years a new type of vehicle has entered our roadways, commonly called an autocycle. These autocycles are classified as motorcycles but have little resemblance or operational characteristics to that of a motorcycle. This ambiguity about autocycles has created a patchwork of rules and regulations regarding licensing, insurance, registration and training courses from state to state.

MRF Position:

The Motorcycle Riders Foundation encourages NHTSA to carefully review and update the definition of a motorcycle. The MRF believes a more appropriate definition would be *“a motor vehicle, as was originally manufactured, with motive power, having a seat or saddle requiring the rider to sit astride, designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, steering controlled by handlebars, acceleration and braking controlled by handlebar and foot controls and capable of reaching speeds in excess of 30 mph.”*

In 2019 a bipartisan group of lawmakers sent a letter to NHTSA asking for clarification of the current definition and whether a revised definition might be appropriate. The lead author of the letter was Congressman Michael Burgess of Texas.

Request:

When your office has dealings with DOT or NHTSA please consider asking about the current definition of a motorcycle and whether this 40-year-old definition is appropriate in 2021.



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CONSUMER PROTECTION AND FUEL TRANSPARENCY ACT

Background

In the summer of 2018, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a proposed rule that aims to require 19.88 billion gallons of biofuels to be blended into the U.S. fuel supply in 2019. Later in the fall, the EPA allowed a year-round E-15 gasoline blend which was previously prohibited during the summer due to air pollution concerns. As a result, there are increasingly higher blends of ethanol showing up at the pump.

The growing prevalence of E-15 fuel in the United States is of concern to a diverse group of consumers. This fuel blend is problematic for engines and equipment in a wide variety of vehicles and products including boats, lawnmowers, chainsaws, motorcycles and snowmobiles. In fact, these higher blends are prohibited by the EPA for the use in small motors such as those listed above. Unfortunately, most consumers are not aware that these fuel blends may be causing damage to their vehicle. A recent survey found 3 in 5 consumers mistakenly believe that E15 is safe for use in all their products.

A bipartisan group of lawmakers previously introduced legislation which sought an educational campaign about E-15. The bill required new labeling at fuel pumps warning consumers to check their owner's manual when using E-15 fuel.

MRF Position:

The Motorcycle Riders Foundation supports an educational campaign and warning label that will alert consumers further education on their part may be needed. By encouraging consumers to check their owner's manual consumers, Americans will have the necessary knowledge to make informed decisions about the fuel they put in their engines. An educated consumer is empowered to make the right decision for their specific circumstances.

Request:

Support consumer education on proper use of E-15.



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AUTOMATED DRIVING SYSTEMS

Background:

Motorcyclists believe that automated driving technology in other vehicles could yield substantial safety benefits for riders by helping to eliminate “human error” which, on average, causes over 90% of the crashes each year. However, motorcycles must be considered in any regulatory activity that governs automated driving systems.

In 2018 the House and Senate had two different bills addressing this new vehicle technology. The House bill H.R. 3388 (SELF DRIVE ACT) passed the House but failed to be considered in the Senate, while the Senate version S. 1885 (AV START ACT) was not voted on.

While both bills aimed to regulate automated driving systems, only the Senate had language specific to motorcyclists. In the bill, an automaker was required to submit a Safety Evaluation Report prior to the vehicle being released on the market. In that report, the automaker must attest that the vehicle can identify and respond to motorcycles. Further, these reports can be made available to the public upon request, providing all road users with information that can make them safer.

MRF Position:

The Motorcycle Riders Foundation maintains that federal authorities must require robust testing of manufacturers of automated driving systems, guaranteeing they have accounted for motorcycle recognition and responsiveness. Additionally, radio spectrum set aside for dedicated short-range communications used in vehicle to vehicle communications should be protected, as vehicle to vehicle communication is necessary for safer interaction between automated driving systems and motorcycles.

Any new legislation by this Congress, in either the House or the Senate, should specifically ensure that motorcycles are considered in the bill language. The MRF continues to meet with House Energy and Commerce Committee staff as well as Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee staff to ensure motorcycles are considered in any legislation surrounding this new technology.

Request:

Demonstrate your office is fully committed to the safety of motorcyclists by reaching out to committee staff and asking them to ensure motorcycles are mentioned by name in any legislation surrounding automated driving systems. Any automated vehicle on the road should be required to identify and respond to motorcyclists.



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MOTORCYCLE CAUCUSES

Background:

Both the House and Senate have motorcycle caucuses. These caucuses represent lawmakers from diverse ideological and geographic backgrounds. The caucuses host educational seminars and press events that shine a light on the issues facing the motorcycle community.

MRF Position:

The Motorcycle Riders Foundation proudly works with both the Senate and House caucuses to achieve legislative victories for our community. The bipartisan membership of these caucuses allows us to know who our champions on Capitol Hill are and which legislators are committed to standing with us on critical issues.

Request:

Join the motorcycle caucus and help fight for the issues of importance to the motorcycle community. Contact Congressman Michael Burgess (R-Texas) office in the House and Senator Gary Peters (D-Michigan) office in the Senate to join.