

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS FOUNDATION

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PASS THE RECOGNIZING THE PROTECTION OF MOTORSPORTS ACT (S.203, H.R.350)

Background:

Members of both the House and Senate have advanced legislation that would protect the rights of Americans to modify their vehicles and motorcycles for racing purposes. Dubbed the Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act or RPM Act, this legislation would ensure that converting any motor vehicle (including street motorcycles) into a competition-only vehicle remains legal. This proposed legislation became necessary after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) insisted they had the authority to regulate racing motorcycles under the Clean Air Act. The Agency continues to state they have this enforcement authority and have the ability to strip motorcyclists of the rights to modify their motorcycles as they see fit.

MRF Position:

Members of the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) along with its colleagues from the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) and others are not satisfied with the EPA response. To ensure that the EPA makes no further attempts to erode motorcyclists' rights, we are advocating for the passage of the RPM Act. The RPM Act will provide clarity to industry and enthusiasts that the Clean Air Act allows motor vehicles, including motorcycles, to be converted into dedicated race vehicles by affirming that it has always been legal to modify a street vehicle into a race vehicle used exclusively at the track and confirms that modifying these vehicles for exclusive track use would not be considered tampering.

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CONGRESS MUST MAKE CHANGES TO THE RENEWABLE FUEL STANDARD

Background:

Because of the expansion of the Renewable Fuel Standard, oil companies are required to blend increasing volumes of renewable fuels (like ethanol) with gasoline and diesel into the nation's fuel supply. As a result, there are increasingly higher blends of ethanol like E15 showing up at the pump. However, these higher blends, like E15 and E85, have not been approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for use in small engines like those in motorcycles. This is due to concerns for potential damage to fuel lines, injectors, seals, gaskets, and valve seats, as well as to carburetors. As a result, many of the manufacturers of smaller engine vehicles and equipment started including statements that warranties would be voided if E15 was used.

MRF Position:

The MRF believes that, until higher blends of ethanol can be approved for use by both the EPA and motorcycle manufacturers, the federal government must guarantee the availability of fuel blends containing no more than 10 percent ethanol by volume at fuel stations across the U.S. as well as separate fuel pumps for gasoline with higher blends of ethanol. In addition, because so much public confusion on this issue exists, there should be a comprehensive consumer-focused set of resources warning about the dangers and legality of using E15 through improving signage and labeling at gas stations and conducting official outreach to small-engine consumers like bikers.

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PASS THE MOTORCYCLE ANTI-PROFILING RESOLUTION H.RES.318 & S.RES.154

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 wear motorcycle-related apparel. In fact, according to a recently conducted national survey, over thirty percent of the 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. The stereotype of the “criminal biker” has been exacerbated by television shows such as “Sons of Anarchy” that depict motorcyclists as dangerous and unlawful citizens, and our communities are suffering the consequences.

Position:

We believe that, through education and awareness, this issue can be addressed and mitigated. The MRF has worked with federal lawmakers in getting a national bipartisan and bicameral bill introduced to address this critical issue. H.Res. 318 & S.Res.154 were introduced to address concerns over the profiling of motorcyclists. Though these are resolutions, they promote public awareness of motorcycle profiling and encourage collaboration and communication between law enforcement and the motorcycle community. Further, the legislation urges state law enforcement officials to condemn motorcycle profiling in written policies and training materials.

**Support these measures and the motorcycle community
by signing on as a co-sponsor!**

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PASS THE AV START ACT S.1885

Background:

Motorcyclists believe that autonomous technology in other vehicles could yield substantial safety benefits for riders by helping to eliminate “human error” which, on average, causes over 90% of crashes each year. However, motorcycles must be considered in any regulatory activity that governs autonomous vehicles. The U.S. House of Representatives introduced H.R.3388, the SELF DRIVE Act last year, while the Senate introduced its own legislation, S.1885, the AV START Act. While both bills aim to regulate autonomous vehicles, only the Senate version (S.1885) has language specific to motorcyclists concerning autonomous vehicles. In the bill, an automaker must submit a Safety Evaluation Report prior to the autonomous vehicle being released on the market. In that report, the automaker must attest that the vehicle can identify and respond to motorcyclists. Further, these reports can be made available to the public upon request.

MRF Position:

The MRF maintains that federal authorities must require robust testing for manufacturers of autonomous vehicles, guaranteeing they have accounted for motorcycle recognition and responsiveness. The only proposal that currently contains such language is S.1885, the AV START Act, currently pending in the Senate. Similar language was NOT included in the H.R.3388 nor were motorcycles mentioned in this context in draft DoT Guidance 2.0 as it relates to object and event detection.

The MRF is working directly with DoT as well as Congress to ensure the viewpoints of bikers across the country are represented on this emerging issue and urge Congress to take up and pass the AV START Act, S.1885.

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