

RIDE WITH THE LEADERS



2019 YEAR-END REPORT

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS FOUNDATION

Email: mrfoffice@mrf.org

Website: www.mrf.org



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Motorcycle Riders Foundation President and Board Chair had these comments upon reviewing our MRF 2019 Annual Report.

"One of the genuine strengths of the Motorcycle Riders Foundation lies in the methodology we use each fall at our Meeting of the Minds Conference in developing our Legislative Agenda. Each September, we host a strategy session where Executive Leadership and legislative experts from State Motorcyclist Rights Organizations from throughout the Country, various Sustaining Motorcycle Club representatives, MRF leadership, and our lobbyists come together to debate and develop our robust agenda for the coming year. We do this to meet the current and future needs and challenges head-on that we face when riding motorcycles and living a motorcyclist lifestyle. This process allows all parties involved to focus on the critical issues ahead of us as one united movement."

"As you see by the body of work summarized in our year-end report, the process results in a thoroughly engaged, very active, and very effective nation of grassroots motorcyclist rights advocates."

"I invite you to join hundreds of your fellow activists at our National Bikers Rights Day known as Bikers Inside the Beltway in Washington, D.C. in May. It is both effective and empowering to realize a few passionate and involved motorcyclists can and will affect laws and policy regarding motorcycling and its associated lifestyle in a meaningful way."

"Our MRF Board of Directors are proud of our accomplishments and grateful for our valued partnerships. We also realize we have much work ahead of us in 2020, and as always will remain forever in the debt of the nation's bikers' rights advocates for the work carried out day in and day out in our communities, our states, our nation, and on the international front."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirk R. Willard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Kirk "Hardtail" Willard
MRF President

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Consumer Protection and Fuel Transparency Act – H.R. 1024

In February, Congressman Scott Austin of Georgia introduced H.R. 1024. This legislation seeks an educational campaign about E-15 and new labeling at fuel pumps warning consumers to check their owner's manual when using E-15 fuel.

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

This is another example of the MRF working with likeminded groups, with common interests to impact legislation. As you can imagine, motorcycles are not the only engines affected by ethanol. The MRF has been in contact with the Marine Retailers Association, National Marine Manufacturers Association, Specialty Equipment Market Association, Briggs & Stratton, American Sportfishing Association, Boat US, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, American Highway Users Alliance and the snowmobile industry in hopes of raising awareness about the impact of ethanol on engines. This legislation currently has 19 bipartisan cosponsors.



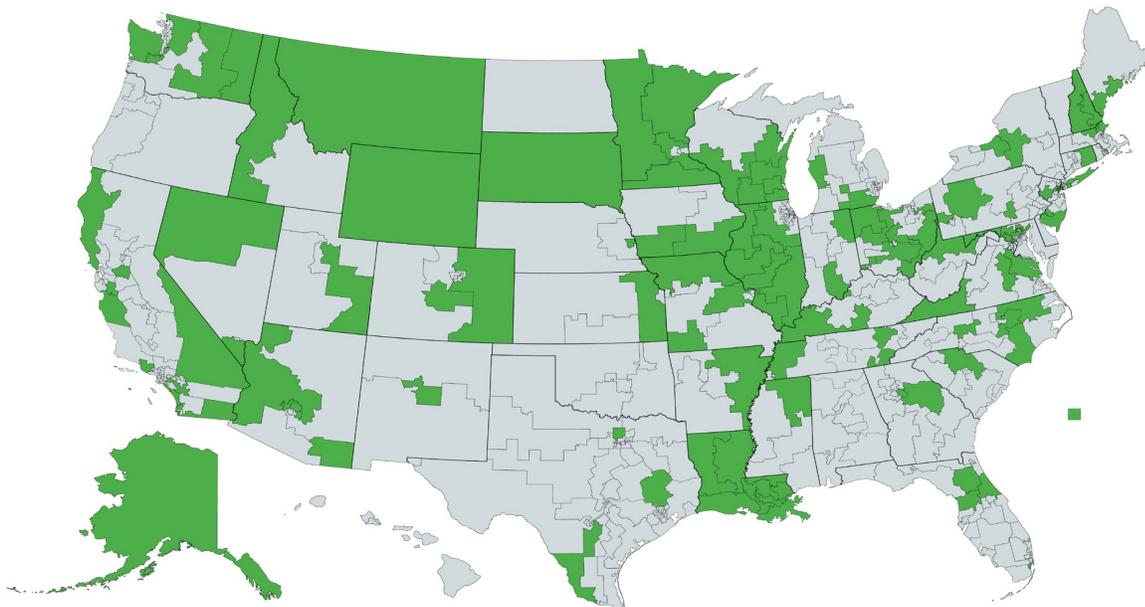
Motorcycle Profiling – H. Res. 255

In March, Congressman Tim Walberg of Michigan introduced H. Res. 255, the motorcyclist profiling resolution in the House of Representatives. This resolution is identical to the Senate version lead by Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin that passed in December 2018.

In an attempt to shine a light on the issue and earn passage in the House of Representatives, the MRF has committed to driving cosponsors to the resolution. The MRF DC team, in coordination with SMRO's and individual MRF members, has undertaken a wide-reaching education campaign aimed at lawmakers and their staffs. This “full-court press” has resulted in over 120 bipartisan members of Congress joining the resolution in just eight months. These members represent 42 different states and American Samoa. Two previous versions of this resolution from 114th and 115th Congress had 18 and 37 cosponsors, respectively.

We hope that this dramatic growth in cosponsors over the last four years will demonstrate to Congressional leadership that motorcyclists and their elected representatives are serious about the issue of profiling and make the passage of H. Res 255 a priority in 2020.

COSPONSORS BY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



Definition of a Motorcycle

In April, members of the House Motorcycle Caucus led by Congressman Michael Burgess of Texas sent a bipartisan letter to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) asking for a review of the current definition of a motorcycle.

The current definition of a motorcycle (listed below) is over 40 years old and extremely broad.

Motorcycle means 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 the ground.

The current definition means that so-called “autocycles” are technically motorcycles under the current federal law. This has created a patchwork set of laws surrounding motorcycles and autocycles at the state level. We thank the seven congressmen who signed the letter seeking information on the topic from NHTSA. The MRF will continue to look for ways to find a more common-sense definition of a motorcycle.

Autonomous Vehicle Technology

In August, the MRF was invited by Senate and House staff to discuss potential autonomous vehicle (AV) legislation. In cooperation with the American Motorcyclists Association and Harley-Davidson Motor Company, the MRF submitted a written proposal listing the priorities for motorcyclists in any autonomous vehicle legislation. In the previous Congress, only the Senate version of this legislation specifically named motorcyclists as roadway users that AV manufacturers needed to account for specifically.

While no bill has yet been made public, the Senate Commerce Committee held a hearing late in the year on the topic of AV technology. The MRF was encouraged when three senators asked officials at the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) about AV policy and further pushed the need to ensure motorcycles are considered in both legislation and the rulemaking process.

RPM ACT of 2019 – S. 2602 and H.R. 5434

In October, Senators Richard Burr of North Carolina and Joe Manchin of West Virginia along with bipartisan cosponsors introduced S. 2602, Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act of 2019 (RPM Act).

This bill excludes vehicles to be used solely for competition from certain provisions of the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes. The Motorcycle Riders Foundation along with a dozen other organizations teamed up with the Specialty Equipment Manufacturers Association (SEMA) during the 115th Congress to promote the passage of this legislation. The bill will exempt individuals from the provisions of the Clean Air Act that make it illegal to modify a street-legal vehicle or motorcycle into performance race vehicle.

The legislation took some time to be introduced during this Congress due to many changes to the previous version of the bill. One hard fought for change ensures this legislation would be in effect immediately upon passage. Just as important is the provision that protects racers, consumers and the aftermarket industry for using or producing, selling, and/or distributing emissions-related race parts for use on vehicles used exclusively for competition while the EPA writes regulations.

In the waning legislative days of 2019, the U.S. House of Representatives followed their colleagues and introduced the companion bill H.R. 5434. This legislation is led by Representatives Patrick McHenry (R-NC) and Raul Ruiz (D-CA) along with six other original cosponsors. Currently, the Senate bill has 28 bipartisan cosponsors and the House bill has 11 bipartisan cosponsors.

Motorcycle Advisory Council – H.R. 5234:

In November, Congressman Mike Gallagher of Wisconsin introduced the Motorcyclist Advisory Council Reauthorization Act.

The Motorcycle Advisory Council (MAC) was first established by Congress in 2005 and reauthorized in 2015. The MAC is responsible for providing advice and recommendations concerning infrastructure issues related to motorcyclist safety, including barrier design, road design, construction, maintenance practices, and the architecture and implementation of intelligent transportation system technologies.

In cooperation with Harley-Davidson, the American Motorcyclists Association and ABATE of Wisconsin, the MRF advocated for common-sense changes to the MAC to help ensure that motorcyclists have a seat at the table when issues impacting them are discussed and recommended to policymakers. Below are three critical changes this legislation would implement.

1. Reauthorizing the MAC for six years. This ensures that the MAC has an established timeline for its work.
2. Requiring that the MAC submit a biennial recommendations report. At a minimum, three reports on motorcycle policy will now be required to be submitted to the Department of Transportation and Congress for review.
3. Clarifying the membership of the MAC: This bill sets aside specific seats on the 12-member board for motorcycle riders and advocates. For example, one seat is reserved for each of the following: a national motorcyclist foundation, a national motorcyclist association, and a national motorcycle manufacturing association.

In 2020, the MRF will continue to educate lawmakers on the topic of the MAC and look for an opportunity for this legislation to pass on its own or be incorporated in a more extensive transportation initiative.

Meetings and Conferences

Bikers Inside the Beltway

The 11th Bikers Inside the Beltway commenced on May 21st at 6:45 am as over 150 bikers began the journey from our hotel in Virginia to the footsteps of the U.S. Capitol.

Riders met with Congressional offices to discuss issues like motorcycle profiling, autonomous vehicle technology, the definition of a motorcycle and consumer education surrounding ethanol. It goes without saying that when 150 plus bikers start roaming the halls of Congress, people take notice. In fact, we were so visible that a Congressman started up a conversation with a few riders in an elevator and the next day signed on to our profiling resolution!

At a ceremony in front of the U.S. Capitol with riders in attendance, Kirk "Hardtail" Willard presented Congressman Michael Burgess of Texas with his Legislator of the Year vest. Congressman Burgess spoke about the formation of the House Motorcycle Caucus and his efforts over the last decade to fight for the rights of motorcyclists. Congressman Burgess was joined at the podium by Congressmen Tim Walberg of Michigan and Congressman Troy Balderson of Ohio. All three Congressmen are riders, members of the House Motorcycle Caucus and passionate about protecting riders on and off the road.

Additionally, Senator John Thune of South Dakota was presented with his legislator of the year vest in a ceremony in his office. Senator Thune was honored because of his hard work to protect motorcyclists regarding autonomous vehicle legislation.

We thank all the riders that came to D.C. we look forward to seeing everyone back on May 19, 2020, and hope to see a few new faces!

Meeting of the Minds

As summer turned to fall, hundreds of bikers gathered in Minnesota for the 35th Annual Meeting of the Minds in Bloomington, Minnesota. As anyone that has attended a Meeting of the Minds, the event is one-part social event, one-part pep talk and one-part a forum for the sharing of ideas. On all three accounts, the event in Minnesota was a resounding success.

The 30-plus SMROs represented shared ideas and strategies on what they are working on in individual states and helped create the framework for the MRF and its priorities for the coming year. The MRF thanks our hosts in Minnesota and all the volunteers and attendees who took time out of their busy lives to focus on motorcyclist rights.

We look forward to the next fall in Indiana and expect our friends in the Hoosier state to deliver a fantastic event! MOTM 2020 will be held on September 24-26th in Indianapolis, Indiana.

State and Regional Events

This year the MRF DC team attended numerous regional and state level motorcycle events to educate members about the MRF and our priorities.

In March, we headed to Omaha, Nebraska, for Heartland STEAM the gathering of SMROs from Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin. In October, the MRF attended the Mid-South Mile in Shreveport, Louisiana, which included motorcycle leaders from Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas.

Additionally, throughout the year, MRF representatives attended state-level meetings in Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin to discuss our federal priorities.

Year-End Stats:

6,182 – The number of letters sent by MRF Members to Congress during our “Call to Actions.”

253 – The number of Senate and House offices Tiffany and Rocky DC personally visited throughout the year to discuss motorcycle issues.

166 – The number of meetings MRF Members did in one day during Bikers Inside the Beltway!

27 – The number of Representatives that are members of the House Motorcycle Caucus.

8 – The Number of Senators that are members of the Senate Motorcycle Caucus.

3 – The Number of fundraisers the MRF PAC authorized the DC team to attend with motorcycle legislative champions (Sen. Johnson, Rep. Walberg, Rep. Burgess).