

U.S. House bill has trails funding, no money for motorcycle checkpoints

PICKERINGTON, Ohio -- Renewed funding for motorized trails and a ban on funding for motorcycle-only checkpoints are included in a major federal transportation bill being considered by a key U.S. House committee, the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) reports.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is expected to vote Feb. 2 on a transportation funding authorization bill -- H.R. 7, the "American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act of 2012." If approved, the measure would go to the full House for a vote before moving to the Senate for consideration.

Since the Senate has its own version of the bill, the spending plan would eventually end up in a House-Senate conference committee where differences would be worked out before going back to both chambers for final approval.

The House measure includes \$85 million a year through fiscal year 2016 for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), which provides money to states to develop and maintain trails. Federal lawmakers had been looking at eliminating the dedicated funding for the program, which threatened to end the RTP.

"Motorcyclists and all-terrain vehicle riders by the thousands spoke, and federal lawmakers listened," said Wayne Allard, AMA vice president for government relations. "We want to thank the members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for their hard work in putting together this massive transportation bill, and for including provisions that benefit our members."

Funds for the RTP come from the federal Highway Trust Fund and represent a portion of the federal motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use. In other words, taxes generated by fuel used for off-highway vehicle recreation -- by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), off-highway motorcycles and off-highway light trucks -- fund the RTP.

The RTP provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The RTP is an assistance program of the U.S. Transportation Department's Federal Highway Administration. The RTP program benefits hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, ATV riding, four-wheel driving, or using other off-road motorized vehicles.

Besides including RTP funding, the House measure bars the U.S. transportation secretary from providing grants to states and local governments for motorcycle-only

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This is in regard to a video on youtube about the Chicago Motorcycle Show at Tinley Park Feb 3 & 4th. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Exru5dPEfAQ>

I do want to reiterate that Paragon, the shows promoter, has no problem with colors, it's the venue Tinley Park Convention Center.

In regards to the Boycott of the Chicago Motorcycle Show and Parts Expo, I read many of the comments posted on FaceBook and other pages and I would like to put this to rest. Some felt ABATE failed in the message they were sending, some felt that we were losing out on an opportunity to gain new members, some even thought that we're climbing aboard the freedom platform in an embarrassing way. And some said Thank you. This is what the boycott was about. A poster that rides that said thank you. First and foremost to those that are truly in the dark about what ABATE is and what we stand for we are not a club. We don't have back patches. And we do not pick and choose which motorcyclist we will represent but we represent all of you.

Now in this instance I had many friends and a few members that had vending opportunities at this event that felt that we were not representing them but in fact hurting them. A very difficult decision to stand by this boycott was made and I entered into knowing full that I would irritate, annoy and yes hurt someone I cared for but unfortunately I had to make that decision. I visit many clubs, associations, and organizations and speak to them about ABATE and what we stand for. To talk out the side of my mouth will never be acceptable to me. When I tell these bikers that I will stand for them in Springfield and DC, that I will support their rights and yes that includes the right to represent their club by wearing colors then I will never turn my back in a decision no matter how unpopular it may make me.

Too many bikers take their freedom to ride as they choose for granted. They take for granted that not only can they choose to ride helmet free, but they also take for granted that they may ride the roads free from discrimination and/or persecution just because they are bikers. I know the history of ABATE and I embrace it to my very soul. I know who started it and why. So many of our brothers and sisters could have lost the right to ride not just helmet free but to RIDE completely and yes I say COMPLETELY in the 70s and through the years if it were not for ABATE. Many of our brothers and sisters would be arrested and detained just because they rode a motorcycle in many towns across the United States if it were not for ABATE. Many of our brothers and sisters would be turned away from Lake Shore Drive and other highway and town thoroughfare fares if not for ABATE. Many of our brothers and sisters would languish as street lights impatiently waiting for a light to turn if it were not for ABATE. AND many of our brothers and sisters would not NEED to shop at a parts expo if it were not for ABATE.

So to say that I and my fellow presidents are ignorant or embarrassing is sadly your views and obviously you do not embrace your freedoms as seriously as we do. We may not have captured the SOA fan, the pleasure rider or the curious this past weekend but we proved that our word means something to everyone else including the naysayers. I do not mock your views but embrace them asking only one thing. Listen. Listen to what ABATE says and stands for. Pay attention for those that are members to your chapter. Embrace what you believe and change what you don't, but get involved. I ask those that supported our decision to join your local chapter. I ask those that were old members to return. I ask that the new members learn about your history, get involved. And I ask all others to remember that there is this group fighting for you. We watch for you and we will defend you.

Judy Kaenel
President of DuKane Chapter
A.B.A.T.E. of Illinois

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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