

Legislatively Speaking...

HIPAA Senate S 577 HR 2793 ABATE OF FLA **URGENT Legislative ACTION needed**
We need every member of ABATE to respond **NOW** Re: HIPAA & healthcare
discrimination against motorcyclists US Senate bill **S 577** & US House bill **HR 2793**

REQUESTED CHANGE in mode of communication: We previously requested letters written & mailed. Now that is too late. Please email of fax any letters or make phone calls to the local & Washington DC offices.

Greetings Freedom Fighters,

I bring this message to you serving in the capacity as your State Legislative Officer. This is a Request for legislative ACTION from each Chapter / all members. I am hopeful our legislative agenda & spirit is alive within your Chapter. I also hope that you believe in what we do & who we are & that your actions can be counted upon to help collectively strengthen the voice & power of our legislative grassroots organization.

ACTION NEEDED – listed below, other original information from MRF also below

We need each ABATE OF FLORIDA member to submit three emails, faxes of letters (or phone calls) – one to their US House Representative & the other two to our US Senators from FL. This is in regard to HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act) which is legislation being worked on in the US Senate & US House. This is important to us because it has provisions to preventing health insurance discrimination against motorcyclists. We had addressed this previously & were successful years ago when the legislation was introduced. Motorcyclists from across the nation worked together to make it happen. No other laws were even passed to undo our previous work, bureaucrats have figured out how to nail us with a couple of loopholes. This legislation will close the loopholes & we need FL motorcyclists & ABATE members to contact our FL legislators in the US Congress & ask them to sign on to these bills as co-sponsors & then vote for them when they come up for a vote The bill number in the Senate S 577 In the Senate, only a handful of yanks are signed on as co-sponsors (6) & not a single one from FL. We have two US Senators from FL; we need all members to write them each a letter.
<http://www.senate.gov/>

Martinez, Mel- (R – FL)
317 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON DC 20510 phone (202) 224-3041

Nelson, Bill- (D - FL)
716 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON DC 20510 phone (202) 224-5274

Email, faxed Letter or phone call to each of these Senators: Please sign onto S.577 as a co-sponsor & vote for it. Thank you

HR 2793 is the corresponding bill in the US House. There are currently 43 co-sponsors in the House, but there is only one from FL (Rep Wexler) FL is a populous state & has many representatives. As the State Motorcycle Rights Organization in FL, we need to pull our weight & get more of them signed on as co-sponsors. The list of our FL members of the US House is below. Each member needs to only send a letter to one of them, whichever is their elected Representative to the US House. The district number should be printed on your voter registration card, but if you need help determining who your US House member is, you can put your address in one of the web sites, call your Chapter Legislative Rep or email me. **Email, faxed Letter or phone call to each of these Representatives in the US House:** "Please sign onto HR 2793 as a co-sponsor & vote for it. Thank you." **Those of you in Representative Wexler's district, still write him & thank him for his support & ask he vote for the bill when it comes up for a vote NOTE: This request for Action is in regard to legislation being addressed by our legislators serving in the **US Congress which convenes in Washington, DC**, - not Tallahassee. This is federal (not state) legislation. Please direct your three letters &/or calls to your two (2) US Senators from FL & the US House member representing your voting district. Sometimes this is important to clarify for newer members or anyone else who may be simply unfamiliar with the difference. This is not just about motorcyclists being discriminated against in FL, our success will help prevent health care discrimination against bikers nationwide.....JEB

Immediately below, please find a response to one of FL's Members in the United States House of Representatives, & below that is the US Reps response to our Nature



Coast Chapter Legislative Reps request that she co-sponsor & support HR2793. The response from our elected official is less than we want to hear. It is valuable to learn what & how they think even when they are not supportive of our requests, & even more valuable is how we may respond back. The response below is a good one. It is not a 'flame' nor does she resort to the attack mode simply because we do not have the desired response. This below is also a valuable example in & of itself:

- someone helping work toward our organization's agenda - sharing the response with us so that we can learn what kind of information will be necessary to provide materials to more effectively educate our elected officials - rational dialogue & request even when a contrary opinion or concern appears to stand in the way of request for support

When we keep coming back to the table with information they previously have not even thought about, we can succeed in educating our elected officials - if we have not alienated them by attacking their viewpoints & beliefs in a hostile or threatening manner. If we stoop to the latter, additional info we try to present will most likely fall on deaf ears.

The following is our member's response to what her House member's shared when asked for HR2793 support:

K C Mallady 7/27/2005 14:01:42 >>> Thank you for taking the time to respond to my email. I know that there are already policies for those of us who participate in "these activities". As I mentioned in my email, I engage in this activity as a source of transportation. With the cost of gasoline rising, motorcycles seem to be a good choice for US transportation needs; reducing the dependence on foreign oil. As I also mentioned, I am a healthcare worker at one of the Level I Trauma Centers in FL. I am more than aware of the cost of healthcare. What happens when there is no insurance to pay for the individual? The hospital must assume this cost. If hospitals begin assuming too much cost there are several things that can happen. One is closure, without funding no one gets care. A second is the cost to those consumers with insurance rises. This would spread the burden across the many instead of just the few hospitals or rehab centers. If you look at this issue in this light, how is a no vote be a saving to anyone? Insurance companies & healthcare facilities have traditionally had to spread the burden of the under- or un-insured across the plane in an effort to stay financially afloat. I continue to urge you to support this legislation that will keep costs down & ensure the healthcare to all of us who pay premiums & participate in "these activities". Sincerely, KC Mallady, RNA Member of ABATE of FL, Inc. Nature Coast Chapter

The following is the response to our member from her congresswoman (because our member had contacted her for HR2793 support)

>>> "Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite" <fl05ima.pub@mail.house.gov> 7/26/2005 20:51:03 >>> Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention. I appreciate the time you took to contact my office on this important issue & welcome the opportunity to respond. Congressman Burgess (TX-26) has introduced H.R. 2793, the HIPPA Recreational Injury Technical Correct Act. The measure would prohibit health insurance providers from denying benefits for an injury from a transportation & recreational activity, such as motorcycling or skiing. This bill has been referred to the Committees on Energy & Commerce, Education & Workforce, & Ways & Means. The bill attempts to correct an alleged technical issue regarding health insurance coverage. However, as the United States continues to grapple with rising health care costs, I worry that mandates such as these only add to the burden. Specific insurance policies are already available to individuals who choose to engage in these activities, so I question why this requirement is needed. That said, I will certainly keep your concerns in mind should the bill come before the House of Representatives for consideration. I thank you for your concern regarding this very important matter & I hope you will continue to share your thoughts & views with me. It is my honor & privilege to serve the people of FL's 5th Congressional District & my offices & staff are here to provide you with any assistance you may need. Sincerely, Ginny Brown-Waite Member of Congress



I Look for You Out on the Road!

“Start seeing motorcycles...” DeLand, FL – According to the FL Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles, over 700,000 Floridians have obtained motorcycle endorsements on their drivers’ license. In just the past five years the number of motorcycles registered in the state of FL has doubled. There are clearly more riders on the road than ever before. ABATE of FL, Inc. (American Bikers Aimed Toward Education) has

long recognized the need for increased motorcycle safety & awareness. With the popularity of motorcycling rising rapidly, the need for motorcycle awareness is greater than ever. ABATE has launched a new campaign to encourage car & truck drivers to watch for these smaller vehicles & share the road. Billboards are going up around the state to encourage drivers to look for motorcycles.

According to the Motorcycle Safety Awareness Program, taught by ABATE of FL, Inc., motorcycles operate on the road differently than four, six & eighteen wheeled vehicles. The most obvious difference is size, however, it also takes balance & momentum to keep a motorcycle upright. Road hazards such as careless or distracted drivers, tire debris, construction materials, potholes, poor road conditions & objects falling from other vehicles pose immediate crash potential for motorcycles. The law affords motorcycle riders their entire lane of travel, without encroachment by other vehicles. They often need to be able to move within that lane to avoid potential road hazards.

Stopping distances fluctuate for motorcycles, varying from the stopping distance needed by cars & trucks. Motorcycle riders approach weather, road & traffic conditions more cautiously than drivers who are surrounded by protective cages of steel. This variant makes it imperative that drivers follow motorcycles using the three-second rule (or more). The motorcycle rider needs to be able to react to variations in road condition & traffic flow without the threat of another vehicle crashing into them from behind.

Increased fuel prices, lower vehicle maintenance costs for motorcycles & traffic congestion are leading the general public to consider motorcycles as an alternate, cost-effective, form of transportation. The recent explosion of riders on the road suggests the number of novice riders is also increasing.

Due to the increased balance & motor skill development involved, the learning curve for safe operation of a motorcycle is much longer than for the operation of four wheeled vehicles. When traveling the highway, it is often hard for drivers to distinguish between these novices & the experienced rider. If a driver encounters a young person on the highways they can safely presume the young person is an inexperienced driver & should be approached with caution. This does not ring true for the motorcycling public as a novice rider may be of any age.

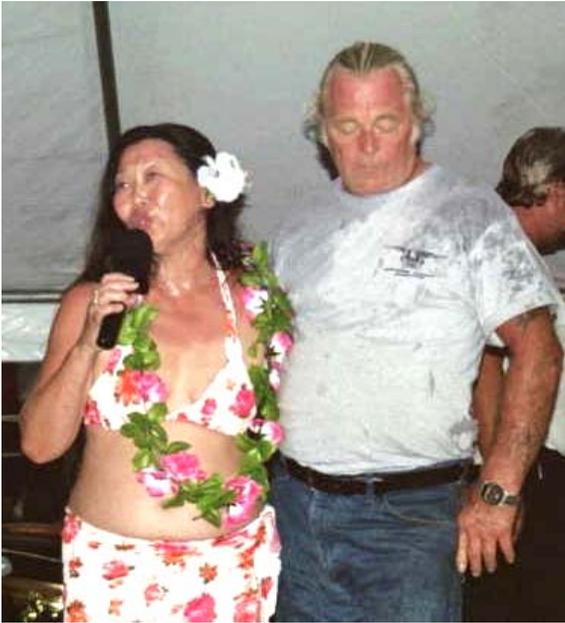
ABATE of FL, Inc., in conjunction with the FL legislature, has placed four billboards on FL highways this week to encourage drivers to be aware of motorcycles & to encourage safe driving habits. These signs have been placed on I-75, I-95, I-10 & Highway 29 coming into FL. There will be additional signs placed in areas like Dade County, Pinellas County, Hillsborough County & Broward County who have seen a sharp increase in the number of car verses motorcycle injuries & fatalities.

Motorcycle riders are mothers, medical professionals, brothers, teachers, engineers, legislators & your next-door neighbor. Start seeing motorcycles!

To get involved in motorcycle safety & awareness promotion, contact: ABATE of FL, Inc. at PO Box 2520, DeLand, FL, 32721 or call 386.943.9610. The life you save may be your own

Karen & her husband president of Nature Coast "HeartAttack"

"FLASHBACK" Presented by ABATE of FL, Inc.



Stepping into the past, while working for the future of motorcycle rights, **ABATE of FL, Inc.** (American Bikers Aimed Toward Education), threw an old-fashioned biker party over the Labor Day weekend. "**Flashback**", delayed one full year due to the hurricane onslaught in 04, will quickly earn its place as a FL biker tradition. Adult motorcycle enthusiasts from across the state enjoyed 3 days & nights of camping & activities on 100 beautiful acres of wooded property in Bronson, provided by Wayne "Heart Attack" Carawan & his wife Karen. ABATE of FL made the weekend an all-inclusive party for bikers over 18, supplying everything needed, on site, from good food & music to showers & bike games. With plenty of premium camping space & twenty-four hour security, the staff went out of their way to make sure there was something for everyone. Drawings, 50/50's, vendor displays & contests ran continuously throughout the event. Patti's kitchen served quality meals from sun up to long after dark, at

very reasonable prices. Coolers were welcomed, but not necessary, with drinks available as well.

Friday night, **The Iron Horse** band got the crowd rocking, bikers dancing in the fields, & the weekend was off to a dynamic start. The heat & humidity even dropped a little, adding to the enjoyment. On Saturday, bike games roared onto center field serving up games from the past with a few new twists. **The Trunk** band took the stage on Saturday night with a combination of blues & southern rock. The band only gave up the spot light long enough for the "**Ms. Flashback**" & "**Mr. Flashback**" contests. Cynthia Willet proudly accepted her title while "R2D2" preferred not to reveal his true identity. He can't hide though. There are plenty of pictures!

Sunday started out with a 142-mile poker run, showcasing the beautiful countryside of Alachua, Levy & Marion counties. The run ended back at the campground just in time for the riders to dust off their machines. **Attorney Larry Crow** sponsored the "Peoples Choice" Bike Show featuring eight classes & Best of Show, with outstanding trophies for the winners. After close inspection, the spectators judged the American, home built & metric bikes. Mother Nature waited until all the motorcycles had been polished before dropping a few jewels of her own to the paint & chrome. She hung tight until the awards were presented to send the crowd dashing for cover, teasing everyone with a quick down burst. The only rain of the weekend lasted just long enough to cool things off & settle the dust, but not long enough to dampen spirits. Winners in their classes were David Fontannaz, "Papa John" Brennon, Dannis Kelly, Chris Allen, "Spacey Dave" Meyers, Bill Shomer, Barney Fife, David Bohn as **Glenn Fischer took Best of Show**.

Sunday night fired up quickly with "**Running Hard**" on stage while five teams went on a scavenger hunt. The contestants involved the entire camp in their search for wild items only bikers would have in their packs while vying for "the win". Karen Carawan treated the spectators to an exotic taste of Hawaii (see picture above). Everyone was spellbound while she performed the traditional Hawaiian wedding dance. During the first band break the scavenger hunt teams showed up to find out who won & collect their trophy. It was then they found out about the "surprise" part two, of the scavenger hunt. The teams had unknowingly entered their male competitors in a "Drag Mr./Ms Flashback". No one survived the show without a few tears of laughter. The men wiggled & jiggled, all in good fun, winning an allotment of "Cyndi's almost world famous Jell-O shots" for their good sportsmanship. Monday morning, while packing gear & tearing down tents, memories of the excellent weekend filled every conversation. There will never be another **1 st "Flashback"** party, however, campers were already making plans to attend next year. **ABATE of FL, Inc.** assured everyone this would become an annual Labor Day event, right in the middle of the 100 acre woods

ALLING ALL ABATE OF FL MEMBERS Stand up & be recognized as a member of a legislative grassroots organization & the State Motorcycle Rights Organization in FL.

Some of our paths have crossed in the last dozen years, but for those I have yet to meet, my name is Jeff Baxla. I have accepted the responsibility of serving as your Legislative officer for the remainder of this term. I have not accepted this responsibility because I have too much time on my hands. I have been working 60 to 80 hours a week for several years now. I have not accepted this responsibility because I think it is cool to be on the State Board. Truth be told I do not have the patience for everything you have to put up with to get the job done. Since I have been here before, I know there is nothing cool about it. I have been here before, I know it is a large responsibility.

I am here because I am concerned about the legislative health & well being of our organization.

We are in the position to need to ready ourselves to put our legislative grassroots freedom machine in motion to protect & preserve everything we have fought for. **Our Freedom of Choice is in harm's way.** There will be an attempt to deprive us of our liberty & pursuit of happiness. We absolutely cannot afford to lose our position & must be ready to fend off all comers. We have learned the hard way that it is much easier to defend ourselves when we occupy the high ground. I am here because I do not intend to spend the next 10 or 20 years trying to regain my Freedom of Choice. I intend to keep my Freedom of Choice from be stripped away.

I am only one person. If I had the power to individually succeed in protecting my Freedom of Choice, I would not be on this Board, but I do not wield any such power. I am only one person, with one small voice & one weak vote. I am here to join together with Chapters & Members from Key West to Pensacola so we can effectively maintain the protection of our Freedoms. **Together our voice is loud. Together our vote is strong.** Together our vote can be strong enough to help remove people from office & even help newcomers defeat incumbents or other strong candidates. Together we are many & to those who don't know any better, we loom very large, even larger than life.

I will need to call upon Chapters & individual members to help make a difference. Sometimes I will need to call upon a single Chapter to make some very important phone calls. There may be times I learn our lobbying activity will need immediate support that includes activation of our entire Statewide Phone Tree. That will not be the time to learn that your Chapter cannot assist. Please prepare now. If your Chapter does not have a **Chapter Phone Tree**, please implement one immediately. If it is not up to date, please do that immediately. At this time, it is necessary we take the next step, please also include email addresses for anyone who has one. Obviously, this must be linked to your membership rolls so it will remain constantly up to date. When your Chapter's Phone/Email Tree is complete & updated, please email it to me. If that is not possible, please mail it or bring it to me at the October State Meeting. I also need **Chapter legislative contact email addresses immediately.** If you do not personally know I have been given this information, please immediately forward me an email address for your Chapter President, Vice-President & Legislative officer. I have heard from a few more since returning from Caryville, but there are several I still need to hear from. Please do not make me track you down.

I can also use some **help**, particularly members not already serving on a Board or who already have their free time committed elsewhere. I need some computer oriented folks who can assist in bill tracking & research. I could use someone with Excel experience to help formulate & maintain some important tools/lists. I need several Legislative Reps in different areas of the state that I call upon to visit a Chapter in person when there are legislative issues or training that need attended to in my absence. I also need some people to step forward & identify themselves as interested in serving in this position next June so I can identify some areas we can work together.

I have heard from several newsletter & web officers as well, it is obvious that there are benefits to a direct link with these & all officers. If you have a desire to be added to a legislative email list, then please email me at

statelegislative@abateflorida.com

George Washington once something to the effect that to truly preserve peace, we must remain prepared to go to war. This is not an exercise; we are preparing for battle & maybe even war. **We need the two letter-writing exercises completed.** Stand up & be recognized.....JEB (Jeff Baxla) Is also a LIFE member of our Lake Cnty Chapter

IT WASN'T MAGIC *Cyndi von Bulow PR/Communications Trustee ABATE of FL, Inc.*

Did you know the helmet laws in FL were amended only five years ago? Before 2000, every motorcycle rider in FL was required by law to wear DOT approved helmets. Since those helmet laws were amended, to allow motorcycle riders over 21 to choose to wear a helmet or not, the number of motorcycles registered in FL has more than doubled. In the past five years, more than twice as many licensed Floridians have obtained their motorcycle endorsements, which you must have in order to legally operate any motorcycle. At least half of FL's motorcycle riders have never been forced to put a helmet on their heads.

Have you ever wondered how you obtained your freedom to choose to wear a helmet or not? It wasn't magic that changed the laws at midnight on July 1, 2000. Have you ever thought about what really went into your right to choose? Most of the FL & national legislators who enact motorcycle regulations are not motorcycle riders & wouldn't think about repealing legislation passed by their predecessors. It took a dedicated group of motorcycle riders, bikers & motorcycle enthusiasts nearly 20 years to educate legislators & enlist enough support to get those laws amended.

ABATE of FL, Inc. members never lost their focus & have fought for motorcycle rights in FL for over 25 years. Less than one percent of the endorsed riders in the state belong to ABATE of FL, Inc. Why are so few fighting for the rights of ALL motorcycle riders?

It can't be that FL motorcycle riders don't care about their freedom. These are the people who love their country & have fought & died for their freedom. These are the outspoken, extroverted personalities who love life, pushing the envelope & their freedom, more than any other group. So why are so few involved in the fight to preserve their lifestyle? Why do so few get involved when there are so many who would love to take it away?

It can't be that they just don't care! Anyone over 18, who cares about preserving the biker lifestyle, is eligible to join ABATE, so that can't be the reason. It is not a club & there are no initiations or commitments, so that can't be it. Men, women, couples & independent riders, regardless of motorcycle choice are welcome, so that can't be the reason either. It only costs 20 dollars a year to ride free, so that isn't a factor. It has to be that FL bikers just don't know about ABATE & how to get involved.

ABATE stands for A Brotherhood Against Totalitarian Enactments or American Bikers Aimed Toward Education. It is an organization of 7,000 men & women, in 34 chapters across FL who care about preserving their rights. ABATE works to promote motorcycle awareness, educate the public on motorcycle related issues & to legislatively preserve the biker lifestyle. But, these are bikers & they don't do anything without making it fun, exciting, finding ways to throw in a get together & go for a ride.

The fight didn't end with amendment of the helmet laws. There is no shortage of people who would take away our rights & there is a tremendous amount of work still facing bikers. If 7,000 have fought for everyone so far, think how much we could do with 70,000. We have to keep moving forward while preserving the rights we've fought so hard to retain. Members can be as active as they choose. They can be supporting members who just pay \$20 a year & go on a run or attend an event or two (and have a whole lot of fun!). Or, they can get involved in educating the public, go on the annual ride to the capitol, help run the organization, write letters to legislators, teach safety classes or participate in organizing events. Whatever level of involvement a person chooses, enables the organization to fight for the rights of ALL motorcycle riders in FL.

Don't wait for someone else to preserve your rights . GET INVOLVED! You can contact ABATE of FL, Inc., at PO Box 2520, DeLand, FL, 32721 or call (386) 943.9610. No matter what you ride, how often you ride or if you just care about preserving the biker lifestyle, get involved. One person can make a difference when they combine their efforts with others of like mind. RIDE SAFE & RIDE FREE

Red/White/Blue License Plate: HB-287

**Was signed into law by Gov. Bush on July 11th 2004
and went into effect on January 1st, 2005**



WAKE UP CALL

August 13, 2005 is a date with a familiar ring. This was the one-year anniversary of hurricane Charlie. Charlie slammed into Port Charlotte. He then swept across the state leaving a path of devastation in his wake, disrupting every life in the state of Florida. As citizens, we had been warned to make preparations every spring. In our arrogance, many people failed to heed that warning and paid a harsh price for failing to be proactive. Even if you were not in the direct path of Charlie, he served as a final wake-up call for all of Florida. We finally realized we are not immune and were woefully unprepared. In very short order, three more hurricanes hit Florida and life has not been the same since.

The bikers in Florida have been warned for years to ride responsibly or loose their freedoms, one piece at a time. On August 8, 2005, The Miami Herald broke a story sighting statistics from a report commissioned by the National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration (NHTSA). The following day, nearly every major paper in the country ran a similar article. The articles (and news reports) slammed the Florida helmet law, which was amended in 2000. The helmet law reform was blamed for the rise in motorcycle related deaths on Florida roads. I'm not going to debate the numbers. Statistical evaluations can say anything the author wants them to say. The truth is, motorcycle riders are dying on Florida roads in alarming numbers.

Florida bikers had been warned, failed to respond and have been issued our own wake up call!! Even though the number of motorcycles on the road has more than doubled since 2000, the general population believes what the news reporters tell them. The uninformed have a tendency to react without investigating the truth behind the headlines and they cast their vote on the opinion of the daily news and often, on collected misinformation.

People who don't ride motorcycles see helmets as a piece of safety equipment equal to seat belts. They have no idea about the lack of objective testing and how helmets can adversely affect rider safety. Many riders have not really thought about why they don't want to wear helmets themselves, they just know they don't like them. Nearly half of the riders on the road today have never had to put them on. They have enjoyed the freedom of choice without knowing how hard it was to achieve that choice.

As ABATE members, if you thought we fought a hard battle to win our freedom of choice, preserving our freedom will be every inch as difficult. Our critics are already crawling out of the woodwork. For the past five years we have enjoyed the spoils of the fight. **Our grace period is over!** We must go back into the battle with information, dedication and perseverance and fight the fight again!

ABATE members must get the facts and prepare themselves to proactively meet this threat to our hard won freedom. There are now over 700,000 endorsed motorcycle riders in the state, we are only 7,000. We must get our brothers and sisters motivated to join us. Get out and talk to everyone you know and every one you meet. Explain the threat and enlist riders to join us. The alternative is putting helmets back on our heads.

Get involved with your chapter safety program and get the truth out to the public. If you aren't registered to vote, get registered, pay attention to who is running for office and then go to the polls and cast your vote. If you ride under the influence of mind-altering substances, stop! Talk to everyone under the age of 21 who rides without a helmet and explain that if they ride without helmets now, their right to choose may not exist when they do reach legal age.

It is difficult to lead. It's hard to do the right thing. However, we are the informed; the ones with the real information and we must lead by example and we must tell everyone what we know. Knowledge is power and there is power in numbers.

We have been warned. The wake up call has been issued. We must respond with a unified front like never before. We all live busy lives, have jobs, families, obligations and responsibilities. Time is precious to each of us and there never seems enough to go around. However, this issue can't sit on the back burner. We can't wait until it's convenient to act. Make a commitment to get more involved and do a little more. Recruit every biker in the state to join forces with us. Don't let petty bickering take up your time or energy. **We can't wait!** We could very well loose everything we have fought so hard to win if we don't **make freedom our priority RIGHT NOW!**

Attention ALL members URGENT action required re Lautenberg amendment Greetings Freedom Fighters, I have urgent request that will require about 15 minutes from every single member of ABATE OF FLORIDA: a letter written and mailed to our US Senator Mel Martinez's Washington, DC office. **NEXT ASSIGNMENT: IMPACT in the US Senate** - We need every member of ABATE OF FLORIDA to write a letter to our Florida US Senator Mel Martinez. Please mail the letters to:

The Honorable Mel Martinez United States Senate Hart 317 Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510
We also need every member to get a friend or family member to do the same – PLEASE ASK someone else to also write a letter. Email is ok if that is how it has to be done, but email is easily deleted. I need 10,000 letters to Senator Martinez. It would be great to have even more, but if each of us will write a letter NOW and also get someone else to do the same, imagine the flood.....Someone in his office is going to have to handle them all, only for a little while will he have to wonder what they are all for. He will quickly realize there are many letters that not only say similar things, but the letters are representative of many people and that it is most likely that the same people who sent the letters are very likely to also report to the polls in the next election and punch a button that will result in him finding something else to do. **Problem:** We were given the information that it was important to support him and he has not supported us. He voted for an amendment to penalize states without mandatory motorcycle helmet laws. We cannot afford a single Florida vote in the US Senate to ever do that again, so we must act now and we must act together to give him a clear message that this is not an area to ever tread upon again. **OBJECTIVE:** annihilate Mel Martinez's office with letters. **PLEASE No threats**, no screaming, no yelling, no profanity. We need our messages to all be rational requests to simply get him on target with what it will take to stay in the US Senate. We want the entire office covered with our letters, but we do not want a single staffer to be able to say a single thing about 'hate' mail or give them any cause.

Members who can spare an additional 5 or 10 minutes: If we want double impact, hit your local or Orlando office for Senator Martinez AND the office in DC, but the minimum is a letter to the Washington, DC office, resulting in the largest wad of paper about a single issue that has ever hit this freshman's office. It is important that he never forgets it, but just as important that we do not paint ourselves or ABATE in a negative light. This letter can be very short. Give your Chapter members examples. Encourage them to change it somewhat, but we all need the same message. Members who want to write long letters, please do so, but state the problem at the beginning and end of the letter. Below are a couple of example letters, the first one courtesy of the Legislative Rep from the Daytona Beach Chapter.

-BEGIN sample letter 1-

The Honorable Mel Martinez -- 315 East Robinson Street --- Landmark Center 1 ---- Orlando, Florida 32801

RE: S732 Safe Accountable Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005

Dear Senator Martinez,

I was dismayed that you voted for the Lautenberg amendment that would redirect federal highway construction funds for those states that do not have a mandatory motorcycle helmet law for adults. Mandatory helmet laws will have little effect on the fatality rates of motorcycle accident victims. In Florida the fatality per 10000 registrations ratios were sometimes higher in the years before Florida allowed adults the freedom to choose when to wear a helmet. Since the 2000 change in Florida's motorcycle law, the ratios of fatalities per accidents and incapacitating injuries per accidents are sometimes lower for those without a helmet than those who wore one. Florida does not receive its fair share of construction funds when comparing what is paid in. To further restrict our highway construction funds on an issue that should be left up to the state legislature is not in the best interest of Florida. Perhaps you were misled by NHSTA. Dr. Runge will soon leave NHSTA. Our nation would be better served by having someone whose has a traffic engineering philosophy instead of a public health stance on highway fatalities. Safer crashing is not the answer, a reduction of accidents is. Yours truly, John Banta

EXTRA CREDIT: Send a copy of the letter to President Bush and Governor Bush. Thanks for your efforts, Let's Rock and bury them in 10k+ letters.....**JEBNOTES:** The Forest Chapter, Southeast Chapter and Lightning Alley are examples of Chapters that maintain weblinks that provide easy access to their Chapter's legislator contact info. Every Chapter doing something like this makes it much easier for our membership to participate. Please be sure to take the same info to the next level and make sure all Chapter newsletters have the names and contact info for all US Congressional and Florida contact info for our elected officials in the Florida legislature.

CHAPTER NEWSLETTERS. Just like all members are not able to attend Chapter meetings, not all members have internet or email addresses. A Chapter newsletter with good information will enable every member to pick up their newsletter and plug themselves into our agenda. If you give them the information, they can use it to send a letter right then or carry it next door or to the library if they want to send an email. **BONUS** – they can also hand that newsletter to a co-worker or a friend and ask them to do the same thing. **If you want to call** your US House Rep or Senator but do not know their phone number, you can call the Capitol switch board in Washington, DC at 202-224-3121 and ask for which office you would like to speak to. Everyone can go the US Senate and US House web pages to email their legislators or get the contact info to write or call.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FLORIDA STATE HELMET LAW

What do I need to do to be able to legally ride a motorcycle without a helmet in the state of Florida?
You need to be at least 21 years of age and have at least \$10,000.00 worth of medical coverage insurance to be able to operate or ride upon a motorcycle without a helmet.

Where can I buy PIP insurance for my motorcycle? *You can't. There is no PIP insurance for motorcycles.*

Does my PIP insurance on my car meet the insurance requirements for my motorcycle?
NO, you must have \$10,000.00 medical payment insurance or some type of healthcare coverage that does not exclude motorcycles with at least \$10,000.00 in coverage.

Which insurance companies offer this type of coverage?

a) Alpha Property and Casualty Insurance - they cover both rider and passenger b) Progressive Insurance Company - they cover both rider and passenger c) Dairyland Insurance

How much does Medical Payment coverage on my motorcycle cost?
The cost of the coverage depends on your driving record.

Do I have to carry liability insurance on my motorcycle?
It is not required but the above companies require you purchase it to get the Medical Payment insurance coverage.

Can I legally wear my novelty helmet?
If you meet the age requirement and have the proper insurance coverage.

Does my health insurance meet the insurance requirements for my motorcycle?
If it does not exclude motorcycles and has at least \$10,000.00 in healthcare benefits. If in doubt request a Certificate of Coverage from your insurance company.

My wife is covered under my company's health insurance, but her name is not on our health insurance card. How does she prove she has insurance?
Carry the top page of your policy that states her name or that it covers family members. If in doubt request a Certificate of Coverage from your insurance company.

Does my VA Benefits meet the insurance requirements for my motorcycle?
Only if you are retired or 100% disabled. Contact your local VA office for confirmation of your coverage.

Does Medicare or Medicaid meet the insurance requirements for my motorcycle?
Yes. If in doubt request a Certificate of Coverage from your insurance company.

Does my passenger have to have his or her own insurance?
Not if your insurance covers both you and the passenger. If it doesn't then the passenger needs to have his or her own insurance coverage.

If I'm not a resident of Florida, what do I need to ride without a helmet in Florida?
You need to be at least 21 years of age and have at least \$10,000.00 worth of medical coverage insurance to be able to operate or ride upon a motorcycle without a helmet.

Will the police stop me for not wearing a helmet?
They have stated that they would not stop someone for just a helmet violation, unless they feel they do