

MRF E-MAIL NEWS Motorcycle Riders Foundation
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For Immediate Release

Contact: Jeff Hennie, Vice President of Government Relations
Email: jeff@mrf.org

May 2, 2008

Secretary Mary Peters officially rang in May as motorcycle safety month Thursday morning in Washington DC with an official event at the base of the US Capitol, the Motorcycle Riders Foundation reports. Alongside her were the chairs of the US House Motorcycle Safety Caucus Reps Burgess (R-TX) and Giffords (D-AZ). There were a few different types of motorcycles on hand to make for a nice photo op. However due to a one-two punch of a driving rain and urgent votes on the House floor, the event was cut short.

The message to motorists was clear though even if the skies were not, May is the beginning of the riding season for a good portion of the country and many motorists are still groggy from the long winter and not used to seeing motorcyclists out on the road. Therefore start talking about motorcycles and getting the word out to share the road. Another message was clear too; motorcycles are here to stay and with gas prices and the state of the economy expect to see more two wheelers everyday.

Michael Burgess had some of the best quotes though, as he shared some stories of his first \$300 motorcycle as a youngster and how much he enjoyed the freedom. "I love the sound of a motorcycle in the morning, it sounds like freedom!" said the congressman. He also had some advice on riding safe. "As a medical doctor and as a motorcyclist, you do not want to be involved in a motorcycle crash of any kind." We at the MRF could not agree more on both counts with the Congressman.

Secretary Mary Peters had her prop helmet on hand that was damaged in a collision a few years ago with her riding partner who also happens to be her husband. She proclaimed May as Motorcycle Safety Month and then extolled the virtues of the 2010 funds, and the Motorcycle Advisory Council. She then gave a short commercial for her proposed legislation to raid the 2010 SAFE TEA LU funds defending her position saying she's not for helmet requirement, just helmet use promotion.

Gabrielle Giffords arrived in a fancy alpinestars-esque leather riding jacket lending an atmosphere of motorcycle cool to the event. She mentioned her House Resolution (HRes 339) that supports the goals of a motorcycle safety month. That resolution is likely to be passed by the US House in the next few weeks. The MRF will keep you informed on that legislation. Representative Giffords owns 3 motorcycles so she can wear that leather just about any where.

You should be familiar with Representatives Burgess and Giffords as the two of them just happen to be the lead sponsors on the HIPAA loophole fix legislation in the House (HR 1076). Burgess made some extensive remarks about the bill saying its "high time to close this loophole once and for all".

The MSF and AMA also gave some brief remarks and the MIC did a fantastic job of organizing and coordinating a top notch event.

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Tiffany Latimer, Public Relations Assistant
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May 5, 2008

MOTORCYCLE AWARENESS MONTH EXTENDS TO OUR ARMED FORCES

Washington, D.C.—Motorcycle safety issues have aroused the armed forces to take a proactive approach in educating their men and women in uniform. In honor of motorcycle awareness month, the Motorcycle Riders Foundation

attended the second annual National Capital Region Joint Service Motorcycle Safety Event this past Friday at the Pentagon.

The two-day educational event is a measure by the D.O.D. to address the number of fatalities that have occurred in the past year. All branches of the military are facing a challenge with the increase of motorcyclists gearing up and hitting the roads. MG James Nutall, Deputy Director of the Army National Guard, stated that the military is facing an issue that they are working to contain to help keep riders safe stating they are dealing with men and women returning from combat some of whom have come home with an invincibility complex. The armed forces require all active military personnel to take a rider education course and wear more personal protective equipment than most state laws require yet they are still experiencing an increasing trend of fatalities. Some of which is accounted for by the sharp increase of ridership.

Ceremonies were kicked off with hundreds of military and civilian motorcyclists gathered to increase rider education and awareness. Transportation Secretary, Mary Peters was on hand to speak at the event. Though legislation did not go unmentioned in her speech (see 08LR09-Leaders Report-May), we commend the Secretary for addressing the military's motorcycle fatality increase. We hope she can put some substantial resources into the countries servicemen and women by working with the D.O.D. to reverse this trend.

After opening remarks were concluded by the speakers, the event moved onto a ribbon cutting ceremony on the Army's new mobile motorcycle simulator trailer that will be used to visit military bases across the country as an additional resource to the motorcycle training program. The Pentagon parking lots was stocked with vendors set up displaying different types of safety equipment as well as different organizations promoting rider education courses.

The highlight of the days activities were the opportunity for riders to participate in a motorcycle rodeo as well as a skills demonstration by the Pentagon Motorcycle Police. The two day event was wrapped on Saturday with a few morning activities as well as a rally ride. Overall, the Joint services presented a variety of outlets and activities to help celebrate with the men and women of the armed forces the different aspects of motorcycle safety.

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BEST OF THE WEST EARLY REGISTRATION CLOSING SOON

Washington, DC — With the summer months quickly approaching, the Motorcycle Riders Foundation is gearing up for the BEST of the West regional conference. This year the event is hosted by the Washington Road Riders Association along with ABATE of Oregon and is set to be held on June 13-15th in Vancouver, Washington.

The MRF encourages you if you have not done so to make your hotel arrangements by Monday, May 12th to receive the conference rate of \$89.95. After Monday, the hotel will no longer hold the block of rooms reserved for this event. Reservations can be made at the Red Lion Hotel at the Quay by calling (360) 694-8341. The hotel is located on 100 Columbia Street, Vancouver, WA 986600 and complimentary airport shuttles are available.

All MRF conferences offer an early registration price break of \$10 for those who register before May 21, 2008. After that deadline, registration for MRF members is \$70, \$80 for non-members and that price includes all seminars and the banquet on Saturday evening. As always, chapter group rates are \$100 and cover an unlimited number of attendees. Unfortunately, the chapter rate does not include the \$35 per person banquet fee which must be paid separately. The chapter registration and banquet fees also need to be paid prior to the Conference.

In order to register for this event, you can visit our website at www.mrf.org or contact the office at (202) 546-0983. Applications can be printed and mailed to the MRF office at 236 Massachusetts Ave N.E., Suite 510, Washington, D.C. 20002. For more information about this conference, contact the Conference Director, Carol Downs, at (303) 204-6939 or by

email at downs@mrf.org.

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May 15, 2008

NEW JERSEY MOTORCYCLISTS NEED YOU AND YOU NEED THEM!

Is this the end for Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ)? The Motorcycle Riders Foundation Political Action Committee (MRFPAC) thinks that it could be if you want it to be. Frank Lautenberg has been the number one proponent of a national motorcycle helmet law for many years. The helmet effectiveness debate aside, you must agree that making this type of law should not be mandated by Washington, but should instead be decided in your state capitol where you have a voice. If Lautenberg had his way, your voice on this issue would be silenced.

There are a few other things about Senator Lautenberg that you should know. First, Lautenberg currently either chairs or sits on every single Senate committee and subcommittee related to transportation, without exception. Second, we are going to begin negotiating another highway bill next year, and if Lautenberg is in charge we will see mandatory federal helmet initiatives of many kinds. Third, continuing the current 2010 motorcycle safety grant funds for which the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF), state motorcyclists' rights organizations, and motorcyclists nationwide fought so hard in the last highway bill, and doing anything to

curb the lobbying activities of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), will be nearly impossible with Lautenberg at the helm, and he will be if he wins his next election.

Lautenberg can be defeated, but not without your help. Lautenberg is running for his 5th term in the US Senate, which would be his 30th year serving in his current role, and he hasn't faced a strong opponent until now.

U.S. Representative Rob Andrews, a fellow Democrat, announced his bid for the seat just over one month ago. Pollsters and pundits predicted that Andrews' late start and rag-tag group of campaign staffers would fail instantly. The critics could not have been more wrong. Andrews hit the ground running and has only run harder and harder with each day. He now has a very legitimate chance of winning the June 3rd primary against Lautenberg, and would then go on to face the Republican challenger. The GOP hasn't won a senate seat in the Garden State since 1972, and New Jersey doesn't appear to be breaking from that tradition this year. Andrews is picking up endorsements from high-profile voting blocks left and right. He is winning the support of New Jersey voters who are ready for change and a new direction for their state. Andrews could very well win this race, but not without your help.

Andrews has also given his written commitment to motorcyclists that he will NEVER support a mandatory helmet law of any kind and will continue to fight for freedom of choice when it comes to personal protective equipment.

Rob Andrews needs your help. Closing the gap against Lautenberg, which Andrews is doing, takes money. The Motorcycle Riders Foundation Political Action Committee (MRFPAC) made one of the largest donations it has ever made to campaign of any kind to Andrews for Senate. MRFPAC is asking you to do the same thing. Anyone across this entire country can donate to Andrews for Senate. You don't have to be from New Jersey, and in fact the motorcyclists of New Jersey can't do this without your help. Andrews needs money and he needs it now.

Donating to Andrews' campaign could not be easier. Simply go online to <http://robandrewsforchange.com/> and donate as little \$10 or as much as \$2300, which is the maximum donation for an individual. Any amount you can afford will help. Federal PACs can donate up to \$5000.

This is a rare political opportunity for the motorcyclists of this country. Some might call it the perfect storm. Rarely does a rising political star rock the boat of a Senior Senator and actually stand a chance. We have that chance with Rob Andrews, but we must act soon. Supporting Andrews financially is the best way to see him take

Lautenberg's seat in the Senate.

Paid for by Motorcycle Riders Foundation Political Action Committee (MRFPAC) through voluntary donations from its members and their families. MRFPAC has qualified as a multi-candidate committee. MRFPAC can only solicit MRF members for donations. MRFPAC contributions are not tax deductible.

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May 17, 2008

The Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) reports that House Resolution 339 (HRes 339) a concurrent resolution supporting the goals of Motorcycle Safety and Awareness month is scheduled for consideration by the United States House of Representatives Monday May 19th, 2008.

The bill has no legislative teeth, meaning it doesn't require the Federal government to do anything, and therefore will be considered under the suspension of the House rules along with a handful of other pieces of legislation.

The bill was introduced by the Co-Chairs of the House Motorcycle Safety Caucus, Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ) and Michael Burgess (R-TX). This bill was conceived and introduced at the direct request of the Motorcycle Industry Council and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

The simple measure never received a hearing but was marked up by the House Full Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Thursday May 15th, 2008. The bill was passed without objection or comment.

The MRF will not be taking a position on the bill at this time. While the MRF is supportive of the goals of motorcycle safety awareness month, we are aware that the term safety can be interpreted in many ways. One of those could be to follow the US DOT and NTSB path and misconstrue "safety" with "safety apparel".

It is the belief of the MRF that motorcycle safety awareness month must address all aspects such as rider education, proper licensing, right of way violations, impaired riding, infrastructure issues, distracted driving and not just safety apparel and at the same time keeping a majority focus on motorist awareness of motorcycles in order to be most effective at saving lives. The emphasis of any motorcycle month must remain on crash avoidance instead of safer crashing.

Other resolutions are also being considered during the same legislative time frame as HRes 339. Some examples are, HRes 1074 commemorating the carving of the Crazy Horse memorial, HRes 1114 designating May 13 as Frank Sinatra Day and HRes 1152 a resolution honoring pro golfer Arnold Palmer.

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May 22, 2008

Motorcycle Month Continues in Nation's Capital

Recently in Washington DC, the federal government dedicated several days to motorcycles according to the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF).

Counting Motorcycles - The week began with a full-day demonstration of traffic-counting technologies at the US Department of Transportation's (DOT) Turner Fairbank traffic research facility. Motorcyclists were assembled to test the counting devices to see how they stack up against each other. Everything from road tubes to radar and video devices were employed on a stretch of closed private road and 20 something motorcycles were ridden through at various speeds and formations. The news isn't great, as the counters that captured 90 plus percentages are virtually non-existent in the field and the counters that are the most widespread are not the most accurate when it comes to motorcycles. Research is being done to better technologies, but we're a long way off from the rule instead of the exception. The findings of the motorcycle research day will be compiled and made available soon. Another factor at play is that vehicle miles traveled (VMT) numbers have historically been voluntary for states to report to the feds, as the MRF has pointed out for several years. As of June 2008, it's now mandatory for states to report motorcycle VMT. It's about time motorcycles were given the same level of respect in the calculating of this important baseline number.

Federal Highway Motorcycle Advisory Council (FHWA-MAC) Convenes - The FHWA-MAC held its fourth meeting last week as well. The council moved forward on a number of issues. Some of the highlights include a web-based motorcycle survey for motorcyclists to gain information into areas that need improvement when it comes to infrastructure and motorcyclists' interaction with the road. The survey will be live soon, and the MRF will let you know when it becomes available. The council also approved comments to the US DOT, and more specifically the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) or the bible of road signs. The MUTCD currently does not have an approved sign for motorcycles. So that means that if your state had the common sense to begin using a motorcycle-specific sign, they open themselves up to a lawsuit from the feds for using a bogus sign, just as they would if they decided to change all of the green lights to blue. Once approved, the sign will display a profile view of a motorcycle and can be added to other surface condition signs such as "loose gravel."

Coming to You Soon from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) - At another government-organized meeting with NHTSA the same week, several studies were brought to light concerning motorcycles. A conspicuity study is due out soon that will examine the effect of day time running lights (DRLs) on cars and motorcycles. The findings of the Canadian study, where DRLs are required for use by everybody, will

determine if DRLs do, in fact, diminish motorists' awareness of motorcycles. Another study underway, but still under wraps, is one that determines the value of combined braking systems for motorcycles. In detail, the study will examine the benefits of a one-lever control for rear and front brakes. This study is reportedly the result of a government statistic that says 80 percent of motorcyclists involved in a crash don't use the front brake. What? That makes little sense to this motorcyclist, and the feds were unable to back that number up. This would be a simulator-type study, not utilizing real world conditions. Yet another study still to be unveiled is one studying the effect of alcohol on motorcyclists. A closed course was set up, a motorcycle was equipped with a pair of outriggers to prevent serious injury, and motorcyclists were issued doses of alcohol and told to get on the bike. The feds observed and are supposedly reporting their findings soon. The last motorcycle-related study also due out soon is a black box feasibility study. All new cars come equipped with high-tech data recorders that imprint the last few seconds of operator input before a crash. This controversial method of keeping an eye on the general public can be beneficial in certain cases. For instance, former Governor Bill Janklow killed a motorcyclist at an intersection. Janklow maintained he stopped at the intersection and didn't see Randy Scott, who was killed by Janklow's SUV. Upon subpoena of the information on the black box, it was proven that Janklow never even tapped the brakes and he went to jail for 100 days. Motorcycles present a host of unique issues on how to record the data, as well as where and how to incorporate the data recorder on a motorcycle; however should the feds mandate their use, the industry will be forced to figure that out and you will have big brother riding along on every ride you take. That doesn't exactly sound like freedom. The MRF will keep you informed on the results of all of these important government studies.

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May 29, 2008

Andrews For Change

Recently the Motorcycle Riders Foundation Political Action Committee (MRFPAC) made you aware of a formidable candidate for US Senate, Rob Andrews (D-NJ) who is looking to unseat long time helmet law advocate, US Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ).

Andrews will continue his battle with Lautenberg in the final showdown on the June 3rd Democratic primary. History shows that New Jersey has not elected a Republican since 1972 and this year isn't lining up to be any different. So, whomever prevails as the victor on June 3rd will likely roll easily through their opponent in the general election this fall.

New Jersey voters are known as late break voters meaning the polls don't show accurate polling numbers until a few days before the election. In the past few days, Andrews is steadily gaining in the polls which signals that this could be a good year not only for his campaign but an even better year for motorcyclists.

MRF Former Vice President of Government Relations, Wayne Curtin recently brought to light the fact that Andrews has historically been a champion for motorcycling. "In February of 1995, Congressman Don Young (R-AK), and 59 original cosponsors, introduced HR 899, the bill that repealed all Federal penalties on States that did not have mandatory helmet laws. Congressman Rob Andrews was among those 60 members of Congress who lead the charge to restore motorcyclists' and states' rights. Words of commitment to motorcyclists' rights are important, but taking action is invaluable. Rob Andrews took action, 18 years ago, when motorcyclists were in a major fight. He is now in the political fight of his life and needs, and deserves, your help!" said Curtin.

Candidate Rob Andrews needs the help of motorcyclists from across the country in his battle against Lautenberg. To support Rob Andrews for Senate, visit <http://robandrewsforchange.com/> and consider making a small donation.

Paid for by Motorcycle Riders Foundation Political Action Committee (MRFPAC) through voluntary donations from its members and their families. MRFPAC has qualified as a multi-candidate committee. MRFPAC can only solicit MRF members for donations. MRFPAC contributions are not tax

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Send in your nominations and donations for the MRF's Young Activist Scholarship fund today. For complete details, visit
<http://www.mrf.org/yascholarship.php>.

Sign up today for the MRF's new roadside assistance program by visiting
<http://www.mrf.org/mrfroadside.php> The program is available to MRF members and non-MRF members.

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The MRF proudly claims state motorcyclists' rights organizations and the very founders of the American riders' rights movement among its leading members. The MRF is involved in federal and state legislation and regulations, motorcycling safety education, training, and public awareness. The MRF provides members and state motorcyclists' rights organizations with direction and information, and sponsors annual regional and national educational seminars for motorcyclists rights activists, as well as publishing a bi-monthly newsletter, THE MRF REPORTS.

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