

Legislative Update for Chatham County CBA – August 2012

Vinny Neuman – Legislative Coordinator – NCRider2010@gmail.com (919) 522-4922 www.NCRider.com

NC State Issues:

The General Assembly is scheduled to convene the 2013 session at noon on January 30, 2013, and you can rest assured that CBA/ABATE of NC will be there to once again protect the rights of motorcyclists.

IMPORTANT NC DATES: MRF's Meeting of the Minds – September 20-23, 2012 General Election: Nov 6, 2012

Federal Issues:

7-16-12: CONGRESS PASSES FEDERAL HIGHWAY BILL - The Highway Bill, HR 4348: MAP-21, has cleared both chambers of Congress and is expected to be signed into law soon by President Obama. The 600-page \$120 billion federal funding measure reauthorizes funds for transportation projects through 2014, and extends the motorcycle safety grant program to the states amounting to a percentage of each state's federal safety dollars that must be spent on rider education and awareness campaigns. Despite considerable lobbying by motorcyclists, language from HR 904 to block funding of motorcycle-only checkpoints was not included in the final passage due to technical germaneness issues, but on the flipside no provisions were adopted in the bill that would negatively impact motorcycling.

7-16-12: EPA OFFICIALLY APPROVES E15 FOR SALE IN THE U.S.- Putting E15 (a mixture of 15% ethanol and 85% gasoline) on sale in the U.S. has been all but official since April, when the Environmental Protection Agency approved the first applications to make E15. Now, "all but official" has become official, with the EPA giving approval for retailers to start selling the controversial biofuel, which many claim can damage smaller engines such as motorcycles and ATVs and void manufacturers' warranties.

7-16-12: NOVELTY HELMETS OUTLAWED IN CANADA - A new provincial law announced by the Ministry of Justice requires motorcyclists in British Columbia to wear helmets that show proper industry certification, such as Snell or a U.S. Dept. of Transportation sticker. The law takes effect in July on Canada Day, and until now motorcyclists could wear anything that was sold as a motorcycle helmet, including so-called "novelty" models that are smaller, lighter and lack protective inner padding. "Many members of biker gangs and their followers wore such helmets," noted the Maple Ridge News in announcing the policy change. "A lot of the Hells Angels guys...they will wear the fake helmets, as well," RCMP Constable Tom Sparks told the newspaper. Once the helmet law is enforced, \$138 tickets will be handed out. In addition to a ticket, riders also will be required to park their bike if they're caught using an illegal helmet. "You cannot continue." Sgt. Dale Somerville added that police aren't targeting any particular segment of riders, but if there's a group that uses non-legal helmets more often, they'll get stopped more often.

Awareness is our best defense. Please stay involved legislatively.



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