

# Legislative Update for Chatham County CBA – Apr 2010

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## NC State Issues:

- **The NC General Assembly will reconvene on Wednesday, May 12, 2010 at 12:00 noon. The State CBA annual Lobby Day will be on Wednesday, May 19, 2010.** We have selected the Sheraton Raleigh Hotel to be the Host hotel for our Lobby Day activities. The Sheraton is located at 421 South Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27601. The phone number is 919-834-9900. The hotel has no parking lot. Parking is available in the Public Parking lot across the street from the hotel at \$2 per hour /maximum of \$12 per day. As of 09 March 2010, there are no restrictions related to motorcycles at this parking lot. We have contracted to use the Magnolia Room as our center of activities for Lobby Day. We will have a WI-FI internet connection to help identify your personal legislators. Informational handouts will be available. The hotel is within walking distance of the Legislative Plaza. (6 city blocks)

**If you are ever discriminated against because you are a biker**, please fill out the compliant form at the below URL. NCOM is gathering data. [http://www.aimncom.com/ncom/ncom\\_complaint.htm](http://www.aimncom.com/ncom/ncom_complaint.htm)

**Dragon's Tail possibly closed for months** Friday, 26 March 2010 - If you notice some motorcycle enthusiasts with a lost and worried look on their face, it may just be performance anxiety. The anxiety has nothing to do with any personal issues, but losing the opportunity to flex the motorcycle performance muscle as Mother Nature closes the king of all 'twisties', the legendary Dragon's Tail. Located primarily in Deals Gap, North Carolina the mountainside eleven mile stretch of road boasts a mind-blowing and constantly leaning 318 curves attracting bikers and drivers alike from all over the world. A rock slide has blocked the road with authorities expecting the route to remain closed until July 31st while crews cleanup. The rock slide occurred on March 14th just as traffic by motorcyclists and thrill-seekers was about to pick up.

## Other State Issues:

- **Patch Holders Denied Entry to Florida State Fair** - About 50 bikers from an array of clubs rolled into the Florida State Fair looking for a good time, but because of the patches on their vests, they were refused entry and turned away. Fair rules, enforced by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, ban gang colors or signs. But a lawyer representing the bikers says their First Amendment rights have been violated. "They're trying to stifle people's rights by using a blanket policy," said Florida Aid to Injured Motorcyclists (A.I.M.) Attorney Jerry Theophilopoulos. "It's suppressing their right to associate in public." The banned bikers belong to a wide variety of clubs, from the Outlaws MC to Christian clubs such as the Spirit Riders, and the New Attitudes, a group of clean and sober riders. "The clubs that were with us, none of them have ever gotten into fights at the fair," Theophilopoulos told the St. Petersburg Times. "They're not street gangs, and they are being lumped together." The bikers' lawyer said he called the Sheriff's Office Sat to tell the agency the bikers were coming, and he was told that if they wore their colors, they wouldn't be let in. They tried to go, anyway. "Sometimes you have to make a statement, to stand up for what you believe in," said Jerry T, who also serves as legal counsel for the local Confederation of Clubs.

## Federal Issues (Reported by the MRF [www.MRF.org](http://www.MRF.org))

- **US House Bill 1253 – HIPAA loophole fix.** – Forces insurance companies to tell you if they will not cover your medical expenses for injuries received in what they consider "dangerous" activities. (motorcycling is one of them) Passed the full House vote on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. In the Senate Health committee. Title: To require that limitations and restrictions on coverage under group health plans be timely disclosed to group health plan sponsors and timely communicated to participants and beneficiaries under such plans in a form that is easily understandable. Sponsor: Rep Burgess, Michael C. [TX-26] (introduced 3/3/2009) Cosponsors (1) Latest Major Action: 4/1/2009 Referred to Senate committee. Status: House voted: 422-3 in favor. Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

- **Right to Repair Act HR 2057** - a bipartisan bill called the Right to Repair Act of 2009 has been introduced in the House of Representatives that would, in fact, make it cheaper and easier for millions of consumers to have their cars and motorcycles repaired. Although similar legislation has been introduced in previous Congresses but not voted on, it takes on additional urgency in these tough economic times, especially with the closing of many auto dealerships. Currently some manufactures only make diagnostic tools and software available to their dealerships, severely limiting repair opportunities for consumers. Enter HR 2057, introduced by Edolphus Towns (D-NY), which would require car manufacturers make the

tools and diagnostic information needed to repair their vehicles available to independent repair shops on the same basis that they make them available to their dealer-operated shops. Basic consumer choice in vehicle repairs means more fair market competition, which helps keep repairs affordable. Enactment of the Right to Repair Act of 2009 would be a win both for small businesses and consumers at a time when both need a boost. Although HR 2057 does have a greater likelihood of passage this Congress than similar bills have in the past, it still has a long way to go before being signed into law. Latest Major Action: 4/22/2009 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. Rep. David Price (Western Wake), Rep. Bob Etheridge (Chatham), and Rep. Brad Miller are already co-sponsors. We are good on this one.

- **Federal SAFETEA-LU Funds have been renewed for another year** enabling us to apply for grant money to help fund our MSAP. This extension was included in the recent "Jobs" bill.

- **MRF's Bikers Inside the Beltway is coming up again on Thursday, May 20th:** National Motorcycle Awareness Month Ride and Lobby Day When: May 20th 9am-2:30pm Please contact [jeff@mrf.org](mailto:jeff@mrf.org) or call 202 546 0983 if you are planning on participating in this event. (Vin can't go)

## International Issues:

- **Half a Billion Electric Motorcycles to Hit the Road** - Worldwide sales of electric powered two-wheel vehicles are set to explode over the next six years. According to a recently released study by U.S. based firm, Pike Research, 466 million e-bikes, e-motorcycles and e-scooters will be on the road by 2016. "Demographics and economics are aligning to create a strong market opportunity for two-wheel electric vehicles," Pike's industry analyst Dave Hurst told Cycle Canada. "In some countries, these vehicles will be engines of economic growth, while in others they will be signals of broader consumer behavioral shifts." Not surprisingly Hurst claims that China will dominate the global electric two-wheel vehicle market, representing more than 95% of sales during the next six years. E-bikes will hold a 56% share of the market, predicts Hurst, followed by e-motorcycles at 43% and e-scooters in distant third with less than 1%.

- **Police in England issue Riders Hi-Vis Vests** - Thousands of British motorcyclists are being stopped by police for not wearing high-visibility clothing. Beginning in March, riders will be stopped and given lectures on "being seen" as well as reflective vests to put on over their jackets or leathers. The Motorcycle Action Group says the tactics are a step towards compulsory hi-vis clothing or reduced insurance pay-outs for riders in dark kit. "We're advising all riders stopped without obvious cause in order to deliver these lectures to make a stand by lodging formal complaints. If police time is tied up too much they may soon drop this tactic."

**Awareness is our best defense. Please stay involved legislatively.**

