June X, 2012

Senator Barbara Boxer
Chair
Senate Environment & Public Works Committee
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative John L. Mica
Chairman
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator James M. Inhofe
Ranking Member
Senate Environment & Public Works Committee
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Nick J. Rahall II
Ranking Member
House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Committee Chairs and Ranking Members:

There is broad bipartisan support on Capitol Hill, and among motorcycle groups across the country, for efforts by Congress to prohibit the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) from funding motorcycle-only-checkpoints (MOCs). We respectfully request that the House-Senate conference committee support this effort by including H.R. 904 in the surface transportation reauthorization conference report.

This provision would prohibit the DOT from providing funds to state and local governments for the purpose of establishing MOCs. MOCs are a controversial and unproven method of addressing motorcyclist safety and have not been an efficient use of limited federal dollars. The very existence of this program essentially profiles a group of citizens – the motorcycling community – for operating a legal mode of transportation.

In addition, DOT should be prohibited from making funds available for MOCs because there are more effective uses of taxpayer money to address motorcycle safety. DOT should focus on programs to instruct motorcyclists on the importance of proper licensing, rider education, and motorcycle awareness campaigns. These efforts will do more to prevent motorcycle crashes than mandatory checkpoints to inspect helmets and tailpipes.

You may recall that H.R. 904 has more than 40 bipartisan cosponsors. Including this language in the conference report would be a victory for encouraging effective motorcycle safety efforts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.