



April 2, 2010

AmericanMotorcyclist.com

David L. Strickland
Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Headquarters
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Strickland:

The American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) is seeking clarification regarding comments you made to U.S. Representative John Olver (D-Mass.). These comments were made at a Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies of the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations hearing regarding the fiscal year 2011 Budget Request for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on March 25, 2010.

Founded in 1924, the AMA is the premier advocate of the motorcycle community. We represent the interests of millions of on- and off-highway motorcyclists. Our mission is to promote the motorcycle lifestyle and protect the future of motorcycling.

It is our understanding you stated the following: safety grants are important and needs to be continued, the "core" of motorcycle safety programs is to instill helmet use, helmet use has a direct correlation to motorcycle fatalities, and anything congress can do to get folks to wear helmets is welcomed, including possible penalties.

Our Association fully supports safety grants and motorcycle rider training programs as a means of preventing crashes and thereby reducing injuries and fatalities. However, adults should maintain the right to voluntarily decide when and what type of protective equipment they wear. We are concerned your comments may indicate an administrative shift away from a comprehensive rider safety approach including rider education, driver awareness, alcohol awareness and crash prevention.

Specifically, what is meant by your reference to the "core" of a motorcycle safety program is to instill helmet use? Additionally, you advocated the use of possible penalties if adult riders choose not to wear protective gear. Does this mean administrative and/or legislative action towards states and/or individual riders if adults choose not to wear protective equipment?

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request for clarification regarding your comments. We look forward to your timely response to this important matter. Should you have any questions or request additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 202-742-4301 or by e-mail at emoreland@ama-cycle.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Edward Moreland', is written over a large, stylized blue flourish that extends across the signature line and slightly above it.

Edward Moreland
Vice President, Government Relations