

## Notes & Quotes From The President

By Darrin Trussell

Things certainly are heating up this year as we head closer to the election this fall. Along with deciding who will be our next President, we are faced with choosing a Senator, as current Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell has decided not to seek re-election.

No sooner than Senator Campbell made his announcement, the Democrats were like sharks smelling blood in the water and chasing after the kill. After some political jockeying, it appears their candidate of choice will be current Attorney General Ken Salazar.

On the Republican side, the candidate of choice will be former Congressman Bob Schaffer. Bob represented the 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District that is currently being served by Marilyn Musgrave.

What irks me about the race for the Senate seat is how the liberal media, i.e. The Denver Compost and the Rocky Mountain Spews, has made it look as though all Ken Salazar has to do is fly to Washington, D.C. and be sworn in. The last time I checked, there was such a thing as a general election to decide those who represent us.

I'm not aware how Ken Salazar stands on the issues of motorcyclist's or gun owner's rights, but I do know Bob Schaffer, who has been a long time member of Riders For Justice, is a supporter of such issues.

Speaking of gun issues, we had a setback at the state level, but scored a major victory at the federal level.

House Bills 1205 and 1281, which sought to repeal the concealed carry database and allow a Vermont-style concealed carry, were both killed.

However, gun owners scored a major victory in the U.S. Senate with the failure of S. 1805. This bill originally sought to protect gun manufacturers from frivolous lawsuits.

Now I know what you're saying, "Is Darrin off his rocker or what?" Understand, it wasn't the original bill that was bad, but all of the amendments. Among the many, an extension of the assault weapons ban and prohibition of so-called "cop killer bullets".

So what this means is starting September 14<sup>th</sup> you will be able to install more than two evil features on your "assault weapon". In addition, you'll also be able to buy standard capacity magazines at a reasonable price.

Other bills being addressed at the state capitol of concern

deal with traffic and auto insurance issues.

House Bill 1076 which prohibits driving in the left lane of a multi-lane highway unless passing another vehicle has passed and is on the way to the Governor.

House Bill 1021 which lowers the DUI limit from .10 to .08 has still yet to make it out of committee. This is set to be heard sometime in April.

House Bill 1287 which requires medical coverage for auto accidents is also in committee. No definite word on when this will be heard.

House Bill 1307 which prohibits insurance companies from using your credit score to determine premiums has passed through the House and is in the Senate Business Affairs & Labor Committee.

On the Senate side, SB 159 which no longer requires a second sample be taken as evidence in cases of DUI has passed both the House and the Senate, but has not yet been sent to the Governor.

In addition to these bills, both pay at the pump insurance bills (HB 1253 & SB 150) failed in committee.

Congratulations go out to our friends in Wyoming. Starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, motorcyclists will be able to ride two abreast, thanks to the passage of House Bill 24.

May 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> promises to be a good time as Bob Schleiger and I will have a booth at the .50 Cal Fun Shoot near Cheyenne Wells. RFJ members that show up will get to fire one free magazine on me. (<http://www.rmfcso.org/events.htm>)

On a final note, be sure to mark your calendar for May 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will be having our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Loop for Lupus poker run.

## Metro Denver News

By Tiger Chandler

Can you believe that it is the middle of March already? It has been a busy time down at the capital so far. It seems that some of the bills that we have been watching that were looking to be good for our cause have been eliminated, which is sad since change can be not what it seems to be to everyone. I won't go into the past, but want to address the future — **APRIL 13<sup>th</sup>!**

Most of us who are the watchdogs of our freedoms know this date is important to our future so I am addressing those who are wondering what I am talking about. If you do not know what **APRIL 13<sup>th</sup>** is I hope by that date you will have done some homework and thought about spending some time with your neighbors.

The evening of **APRIL 13<sup>th</sup>** is the precinct caucuses. The first step in change is right in your neighborhoods at these

**Continued Page 2**

## RIDERS FOR JUSTICE MEETINGS

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**EASTERN SLOPE  
APRIL 11th, 2004  
SUNDAY 11:00 A.M.  
APRIL 13th, 2004  
TUESDAY 7:00 P.M.  
AMERICAN LEGION  
WINDSOR, CO**

\*\*\*\*\*

**WESTERN SLOPE  
APRIL 14th, 2004  
WEDNESDAY 7:00 P.M.  
EAGLES LODGE  
ORCHARD MESA  
GRAND JUNCTION, CO**

\*\*\*\*\*

**DENVER METRO  
APRIL 8th, 2004  
THURSDAY 7:30 P.M.  
DENNY'S  
I-25 & 38TH**

\*\*\*\*\*

*"The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." - Edmund Burke*

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## Riders For Justice Bylaws

1. The organizations's purpose is to defend and promote the rights of bikers, as well as, to associate for social reasons.
2. Persons speaking on behalf of RFJ must be the elected officers of a representative designated by the membership or officers.
3. All officers must be a registered voter and have a valid motorcycle license.
4. The membership can by a 3/4 majority, effect an election of officers at any regular meeting.
5. The membership can by a 3/4 majority vote, deny new membership, if any member questions the new membership.
6. In order for anyone to vote at the meetings, they must be a paid member.
7. Renewal of membership dues are from October to October.
8. Should this organization be dissolved, all funds shall be donated to a similar organization.

## Purpose of Riders For Justice

1. We intend to support our current Constitution and keep as much of it intact as we can.
2. We also advise our membership of the best candidates for which to vote. When they are sometimes equally good or bad, we do not make a recommendation.
3. We DO NOT and WILL NOT receive money from any government entity.
4. Our officers are available through email and/or direct telephone.
5. None of our officers are paid for their work or reimbursed for food, travel or lodging.
6. We hire a lobbying firm to represent us at the state capitol.
7. The officers also lobby at the capitol and at town meetings with state and federal congressmen.
8. We ARE NOT and DO NOT intend to be politically correct.
9. We print in our newsletter, articles of political and social interest for members, as well as, keeping them abreast of current and potential bills.

small meetings where the Democrats or Republicans choose their directions and candidates for the next year or so. While it is too late to register as a Democrat or Republican to attend your local precinct caucuses, those who are registered should attend. If you are not sure where to attend your local precinct caucuses, you can find out from your local party offices or the county clerk.

For those of you who do not know what to expect, I will tell you that my first time (which was 12yrs ago) I went to a neighbors home where I found a group of 4 elderly women who made up that precinct's Republican delegation. From the conversation, these women had been doing this forever and let me tell you, they were happy to have a new face. We talked about the candidates, and made up our list of those who would get our precinct's nomination. The other item which I found most interesting was resolutions. I did not know that this was even possible, to voice ones thoughts to the party like this.

Well to make a long story shorter – these women chose me to attend the county caucus and I did go to state that year also. It is amazing to know who really is making the wheels turn in government. I cannot say enough about this issue to everyone that I meet.

Now for my gripe – for all of those who sit back and let the few work for our freedoms this is for you – get off your butts and do something about getting our government in line with what we would like them to do. For everyone who sits and complains about everything from the President to the local Sheriff, from the city laws to the federal laws – until you vote and possibly go to your local precinct caucus's — you have no room to talk. Taking an hour or so on **APRIL 13<sup>th</sup>** does make a difference.

When I am out on my bike, I have a habit of asking people what they think about the current government, issues, politics, etc. When they tell me that they have some complaints, my first response is to find out if they are involved in the process, like being registered to vote. When they tell me that they are not, that really gets me irritated, to say the least. How dare they complain when they are not involved? Every vote counts!

So to wrap this up I just want to tell those who may pick up this newsletter and who just sit back to let others take care of the business at hand – get off your butts and get involved – we need everyone to ensure our freedoms are not taken away by those who wish to “make our lives better”.

On a good note, our second Denver metro meeting went off with a bang. Our group was just a few smaller, but we did have some new faces and Sally joined! I want to say if you have not attended a meeting you should go to one just to listen to what is happening with those bills that may become laws soon. Darrin and Lucky came down again to help with the meeting, which I am so proud to be working with these two men. It is so good to actually have men like these working on our side; they know what they are talking about and actually go out of their way to stay informed.

Like today (3/15/04) they came by my home and gave me a ride with them to the state house, to spend the day listening to committees, talking to those important people that help us keep our freedoms in tack. It was a long day, but I left proud that we were there being seen and heard. So if you're in the Denver area I would like to invite you to come to our next meeting – you just may walk away with a little bit more knowledge!

## Notes from NorthEast Colorado

By Lucky

Here it is April already! With only two months left in session, we've done pretty well so far. All the helmet bill conundrum has been held at bay for another year. The gun bills, be it good or bad, have disappeared into the election year ether. And pay at the pump insurance was also put down. Who in their right mind would lobby for this one?

Election years are hard, because we make some good contacts with Reps. and then the future is uncertain if we will be able to keep them! Right now the balance is in our favor. We have several Reps., and at least two State Senators as RFJ allies! We also have Marilyn Musgrave, Dist. 4, (and I hope Wayne Allard) on the Fed. side. My intention is to help keep our momentum going by supporting these people in Nov. More on this later.

Now the attention in the Capitol is the budget. What to do when you're 490+mill in debt? Tabor allows us to spend 87 mil. So look for legislation concerning changes to Tabor, and also Amend. 23. Any changes made to these will have to be brought up to the voters. (A subsequent amendment will need to be provided). There is no easy fix, but the State Constitution requires a balanced budget. For this term I look for them to rob, err, borrow from medicaid, and education to accomplish an even keel. Another problem is what to do with the tobacco monies? There are limits to what comes into our state as well as goes out. This is another

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## RIDERS FOR JUSTICE

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issue with Tabor. The tobacco money could really help. Remember "notes" from last month's issue of RFJ?

Through all of this, I remember back to the beginning of the session, and water was one of the main concerns. There has been little mention of this lately. Unencumbered land development, and urban sprawl isn't being looked at either. This is a paradox because we can't keep on developing with no water. We are not even close to being out of the drought!

Another issue is HB1203, that would prevent the government from "blighting" undeveloped land, or eminent domain. If you live around Loveland, you would notice that the city got several acres of farm land behind the Outlet Malls this way. An amended reading passed, but it was referred back for a second reading.

HB1315, the "educational equality" bill was also held over. HB1375 the controversial bill to keep from teaching "alternative lifestyles" in schools was amended and passed along party lines. Darrin, Tiger, and I were there to witness this one. Boy was that ever a long drawn out process! The proceedings were held in the old Supreme Court chambers, because of the immensity of the crowd. Most of which were opposed to the bill.

Other bills in the news. HB1017 would toughen up rules for learner's permits, driver ed. for youngsters. HB1034 is renewal of driver's licenses for 21 to 65 by internet. Amended version passed 44-19 by full house. HB1187 would prevent illegal immigrants from receiving in state tuition to universities. Passed the house, now awaits second reading in the Senate. HB1150 I call the "cheeseburger bill" (along with S.20) prevents lawsuits against restaurants for obesity, and other health problems. And a proposal to grant subpoena power to the CU panel looking into naughties in the athletic depts. I would like not to get started on this one.

There is a heck of a lot more bills in the news. For lack of space I won't delve into them all, besides it is probably getting boring!

I would like to now introduce our new Eastern Slope Treas.-Sec., Ann Genua. Thanks for coming on board! Hope you know what you're getting yourself into! Your help is greatly appreciated. We can use all the help we can get!

Speaking of help, May 2, is our 5th Annual Loop for Lupus Poker Run. Call or e-me if you want to sign up. Or sign up at one of the April meetings, look on the front page for times and places. Needed are people to man the stops, and I would like someone to help get raffle donations, put up flyers.

To digress a bit, since campaign finance went into effect, we will have to be careful about what and when we print. Although we do not throw money towards any candidate, it probably will be okay to print the voters guide this year. Bob will want to maybe get it in September's issue, just to be safe.

Anyway, I would like to endorse Bob Shaffer to take over for Ben Nighthorse. Bob is a good friend to RFJ, and has been a long time member. He will serve Colorado, and bikers well.

It was hard to choose the quote for the month so, here are two.

*"Government big enough to supply everything you need is big enough to take everything you have...the course of history shows that as a government grows, liberty decreases."* - Thomas Jefferson

*"The beauty of the Second Amendment is it will be unnecessary until they try to take it away."* - Gen. Bradley

## Bits And Picks From the West V.P.

By Carl Dodson

For openers, we had a good meeting with above average group count. We discussed a Sunday or Saturday ride and a suggestion for having a fundraiser and fall party combo. All of this is still in the planing stage.

We are putting the final touches on the BikePac seminar. So far, we have 13 that would like to attend from those who were at the meeting and a preliminary date of April 17 was set. There will be no cost for you to attend the seminar. We are looking for a place to accommodate about 30 people. This seminar will last about 8 hours and I assume that there will a lunch break so I can gas up on a beer and hamburger.

I know I will personally benefit from this. This will sharpen your skills and help you gain the knowledge on how new bills are formed and develop into laws. What can make these laws so dangerous is that they can erode away your rights and you will never see most of them at a voting booth. This is where the Motorcycle Rights Organizations came into the picture and it is a very effective tool for dealing with that problem. You want to know something? IT WORKS.

So if you want to attend, bring a note pad and scratching tool for notes. For those who cannot be at our next meeting to get the time and place you can call me at my home phone for the info at 970-874-3473 after the next meeting in April.

Now for an update on the home front. After the 18 and under lid law was put on the back burner thanks to Tiger's article in last month's paper, I learned that Rep. McCluskey (R), from Fort Collins, was going to write a helmet law. So I emailed editor Bob about this and asked what he knew about it. Bob's reply was that Darrin and Lucky had been told by McCluskey that it was not going to happen this year. Again we luck out!

HB-1021, the .08 DUI bill is still in the Appropriation Committee decaying from egg rot. This bill is just sitting there and not moving. Bob's guess is that they can't

**RIDERS FOR JUSTICE 3.**  
find enough votes to run with it. Bob also told me that he had two Appropriation committee members that told him they were not going to submit to the federal blackmail and don't support .08 laws.

Senator Campbell is not going to seek reelection. We are going to lose a huge amount of support to our cause. Senator Campbell opened some peoples eyes as to what we are, brought us much credibility and respect simply by being one of us. He is going to be missed by all. I found out that McInnis may decide to run for the seat being vacated by Senator Campbell. A few years back Senator McInnis before he was opted out seeking a seventh term came to bat for us on the Riders Appeal law alone and with Senator Campbell got the law shot down. If he does decide to run, I'm going to support him.

The western slope RFJ fundraiser was a great success as usual and all had a good time. We announced the winners of the membership drive at the party and they are Miss Vicki and Wizz tied for runner up. We had to draw straws for the winner and Wizz won. Rusty was the top winner with 9 members signed up. Total signups in the drive were 22 members. Thanks everyone for the making this a success.

Thought for the road: wanabe cosmetic dress over inflated ego, that ready to burst and not having enough horsepower to make the grade without the smarts to reach the top.

*If you have been voting for politicians who promise to give you goodies at someone else's expense, then you have no right to complain when they take your money and give it to someone else, including themselves. - THOMAS SOWELL*

# TATTOO

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# COUNTY FEES DISCRIMINATE AGAINST MOTORCYCLISTS

Editorial submitted by RFJ member Liliias Jarding

In case you didn't know, we all help pay for services in the counties we live in...y'know, taxes. But the fees we pay to enter County and State parks are "user fees" – that is, only the people who use the parks pay the fees. The idea is that people pay to "use" the resources the parks have to offer – parking lots, trails, boat ramps, scenery, picnic tables, out-houses, drinking water, and the like.

For example, in Larimer County, if I buy an annual County park sticker so that I can use the County's parks any time I want all year long, it costs me \$65 for the first "vehicle" and \$40 for the second "vehicle." The fee is the same for any type of vehicle — a car or a bus or a motorcycle.

This is blatantly unfair, as well as contrary to the basic reason for "user" fees — having people pay for the County resources they "use."

Here's why. When I ride my Softail to Horsetooth Mountain Park, I may have a maximum of one rider along. When my husband comes along on his bike, we may have a total of 4 people using the County Park's resources. Both bikes take up one parking space at the trailhead. So we take one parking space "resource" and bring in a maximum of four people to use the trails, scenery, and restrooms.

For the same fee, someone can bring in a van-load of people – 7 people in a minivan, for example. They also use one parking space "resource," and 7 people walk the trails, use the restrooms, and the like. Added to that, a lot of people bring their dogs. And dogs do what dogs do in the Park, of course. Most people do clean it up, but the point is that dogs also "use" the park.

Okay, now assume that our family and the family with the minivan have annual passes to use County parks. And assume that we go to the park 10 times (which is about what it takes to break even for the year on the cost of our park stickers). The minivan would use 10 "parking space resources," 70 "people resources," and 30 "dog resources." For \$65. My family would use 10 "parking space resources," 40 "people resources," and no "dog resources." And we'd pay \$105.

Feeling discriminated against yet? Well, don't get me going about buses.

I've written the County Parks and Open Lands folks about this twice. Last year, they promised to "consider" the situation. This year, I haven't heard back from them yet.

So maybe a little contact from other riders would help them see how many people this policy impacts. I see a lot of people on bikes up in the foothills by Horsetooth Park, and I bet we're not the only ones who would like to be able to stop and take advantage of the County Parks — and pay our fair share for our use of County "resources" – but not more.

*"Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."* — Thomas Paine

*"Cattle die, and kinsmen die, and so must one die oneself. But there is one thing I know which never dies, and that is the fame of a dead man's deeds."* — Old Norse Proverb

# NCOM COAST TO COAST BIKER NEWS

Compiled & Edited by Bill Bish,  
National Coalition of Motorcyclists

**THE PRICE OF FREEDOM:** ABATE of Florida, Inc. has concluded an economic impact study for the first three fiscal years of Florida's amended helmet law, and the bottom line reveals that "freedom of choice" has generated over a billion dollars into the state's economy from the increase in ridership. From 2000 to 2003 Florida's motorcycle registrations went from 228,914 to 355,007, which represents a 55% increase. The motorcycle registration figures are compiled from the statistics of the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. The monetary figures come from the license and registration bureau.

114,457 motorcycles at a low average of \$10,000 each =  
\$1,144,570,000

Sales tax on motorcycles at 6% = \$68,674,200

Registration fees on motorcycles = \$4,578,280

Change of Title = \$3,406,094

TOTAL = \$1,221,228,574

"This is a low estimate as it doesn't include accessories and other items bought," according to James "Doc" Reichenbach II, State President and Lobbyist for ABATE of Florida, and Chairman of the Board for the National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM). "This is over 1.2 BILLION DOLLARS in three years that was put into the economy of the State of Florida."

Over 75 MILLION DOLLARS went directly into the state treasury for the general fund. This does not include the tourist money that has increased because of Florida now being a freedom of choice state. In the past three years, over 1.3 billion dollars has been spent in Florida for Bike Week and Biketoberfest.

"I hope this report will help anyone who has heard the bad publicity that has come out of our amended law," said Doc. "The motorcyclists have certainly paid their fair share into the Florida economy and it can be done in every state."

**CHINESE MOVE TO BAN MOTORCYCLES:** China, the world's leading motorcycle producer, has begun banning motorcycles in urban areas. Currently, nearly 100 large and medium-size cities, including Beijing, Guangzhou and Xi'an, ban or limit the use of motorcycles to curb increasing air pollution, accident rates and crime. Analysts estimate that China will not have an urban market for motorcycles by 2010 if more cities continue to ban their use.

Since 1994, cities like Shanghai, Tianjin and Nantong have stopped issuing licenses to new motorcycles. In Shanghai, many motorcycle shops were even shut down recently. In 2002, the city of Guangzhou (formerly Canton), shortened the service life of motorbikes to 8 or 10 years from the previous 13 years, and is offering cash rewards to owners who discard their bikes before their "end of life" expires. Within 3 months, the city will begin phasing out motorcycles, leading up to a total ban by 2007.

Nowadays, the Chinese government is following a "no encouragement and no support" policy towards the motorcycle industry, despite the fact that for the seventh year in a row China has produced more motorcycles than any other country — 13 million annually, with more than 3 million exported to foreign markets every year. The lucrative industry attracted nearly 200 producers during the 1990's, but only 18 have an

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annual production capacity of over 200,000 units, and only three can make more than 1 million each.

"Under the current circumstances, where even county-level cities have started to restrict the use of motorbikes, we have no choice but to focus on the countryside and international markets," Zhang Dahu, director of the Motorcycle Association under the Association of Chinese Automobile Manufacturers, told China Business Weekly.

In the meantime, American motorcycle manufacturer Harley-Davidson has enlisted the U.S. federal government to fight what it calls protectionist Chinese trade practices, which include a 50% duty on imports, that make it nearly impossible for foreign motorcycle manufacturers to establish a foothold in the planet's most populous nation and potentially it's biggest motorcycle market.

## DUTCH SAFETY EXPERT WANTS MOTORCYCLES OFF

**THE ROAD:** Dutch road safety expert Matthijs Koornstra wants motorcycles discouraged from using public roads, stating that "all motorcycles should be removed from traffic or at least people should be discouraged from riding them through drastically increasing road taxes and insurance premiums."

The Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations (FEMA) has criticized Koornstra's simplistic views to improve the safety of Powered Two-Wheelers (motorcycles), which they say "favors marginalization of motorcycles to simply make them disappear from the roads." Unfortunately, previous meetings with Koornstra have not been productive, reports FEMA.

## MOTORCYCLES EASE LONDON CONGESTION:

Since February 17 last year, motorists driving into the heart of western Europe's biggest city on weekdays between 7 am and 6:30 pm have had to fork out a toll of five pounds (\$9.45 US, or 7.40 euros), but motorcycles are exempt.

Transport of London, the body which oversees the congestion charge, says the fee has cut traffic delays by 30 percent and also reduced the number of cars entering the zone by 30 percent. Overall, traffic entering central London has dropped 18 percent and the average speed has risen by 15 percent. Motorcycle sales are up 20 percent in London, and motorcycle traffic in the city has increased 20 percent, but there has been a 15 percent decrease in motorcycle casualties.

The toll is not popular with commuters, however, with 70 percent of drivers opposed to continuing the congestion charge, while 42 percent of retailers blame it for a drop in area commerce.

**LA-DI-F\*\*\*ING-DA:** A routine traffic stop last June 15 near Gate City, Virginia turned into a free speech issue when motorcyclist Roy Lynn Greene was pulled over for loud exhaust and the trooper noticed his leather jacket.

"While he had the gentleman pulled over, he noticed these two patches that were on his leather jacket that contained the 'F' word on both of them," said Commonwealth's Attorney

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Marcus McClung. "He was riding his motorcycle on a public road on a Sunday, and those words were in plain view of everyone, including children. People coming out of church don't need to see that," McClung said.

In addition to the noise violation, Greene was issued a citation under the Code of Virginia, Section 18.2374, which is classified as possession of obscene material in a public place, a Class 1 misdemeanor.

The case has already been before the judge in general district court and was appealed by the Commonwealth to circuit court, contending that this is a violation of community standards.

"I believe that the statements on the patches were obscene and the arresting officer acted accordingly in charging the defendant," said McClung. "I thought (this case) was separate from the other cases that the Supreme Court has ruled upon. They have agreed that statements like 'f\*\*\* the war' are appropriate because they have some social value. My argument was that the items, or the patches, were obscene by the community of Scott County and have absolutely no social value. The phrase 'la-di-f\*\*\*ing-da' has no social value that I see. Whether or not the judge agrees with that, I don't know."

Circuit Judge Birg Sergent is expected to render a decision in an appeal made by McClung in the case next month. Greene faces possible jail time and up to \$2,500 in fines if McClung's appeal is approved.

**FLORIDA BILL WOULD FUND ABATE SAFETY PROJECTS:** Trauma centers around the state of Florida would get a much needed financial boost from some of their most frequent patients — drivers who run red lights — under a bill that jacks up the fines for the crime. And House Bill 65, sponsored by House Speaker Pro Tempore Lindsay Harrington (R-Punta Gorda) would also turn the motorcyclist advocacy group American Bikers Aiming Toward Education into a major educator.

Under an amendment tacked onto the bill Tuesday, February 17, ABATE of Florida would receive \$1 million per year "for the purpose of fostering motorcycle safety awareness, education and research programs relating to accident prevention."

Last year, the organization had to "rob Peter to pay Paul" in order to spend about \$150,000 on education programs, James "Doc" Reichenbach II told Greg Martin, a staff writer for the Sun-Herald. Reichenbach is the State President of ABATE of Florida, its capitol lobbyist, and Chairman of the Board of the National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM).

"I want to see this thing go to billboards," Reichenbach said of the education campaign, noting that ABATE would post 250 billboards to remind motorists to watch for motorcycles. "I want to send my people into high schools. I want to hold safety seminars to see what we can do to reduce accidents and injuries."

His comments came after the House Transportation Committee voted unanimously to pass the bill. Next, it must survive a review by the Finance and Taxation Committee before going to the House floor. A Senate version must travel a parallel road.

If passed, the increased penalties would generate an additional \$57.6 million, according to an analysis by transportation committee staff. All but \$1 million for ABATE would get put into a trauma center trust fund to be disbursed to each of 22 trauma centers in the state.

Harrington, who is confident of passage, said he sponsored

the bill at the request of ABATE which expressed concern over judges who had fined motorists as little as \$80 in accidents that killed motorcyclists.

**NEWS OF THE WEIRD: HELMET SAVES MAN FROM GUNSHOT:** This newsbit from Dixie Rider may be evidence that wearing a helmet can save your life, at least if you're being shot at. According to a Channel 13 Eyewitness News broadcast in Houston, Texas, an unidentified man was saved when he was shot by his girlfriend, because he was still wearing his motorcycle helmet.

According to the TV news report, the couple had been riding together earlier in the evening, and an argument erupted when they arrived home around midnight.

Police say the girlfriend then shot the male in the head, but his full-face helmet protected him from serious injury. The female then barricaded herself in a nearby apartment until police hostage negotiation teams were able to convince her to surrender. She was charged with aggravated assault.

**CAMPBELL ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT:** It is with heavy heart that NCOM relays the March 3rd announcement that U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell will not seek re-election for health reasons.

Campbell is a longtime member of the NCOM Legislative Task Force and has been a champion for bikers' rights for many years, having been actively involved in every piece of motorcycle legislation passed by Congress since the eighties. He was elected to serve as a Democrat in the Colorado House starting in 1982, serving two terms before being elected to Congress. After serving in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1987 to 1992, Campbell won the Senate seat he now holds. He switched to the Republican Party in 1995, and was re-elected in 1998 by nearly two-thirds of the vote.

Born April 13, 1933, in Auburn, Calif., Campbell is one of two children of May Vierra, a Portuguese immigrant, and Albert Campbell, a member of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Tribe. The senator is one of 44 chiefs of that tribe, and one of only eight Native American Indians ever to serve in Congress. He is a renowned jewelry designer whose Nighthorse signature pieces are prized by collectors of fine native jewelry.

Campbell served in the U.S. Air Force from 1951-53, and fought in the Korean War as an airman second class. He graduated from San Jose University in 1957 with a degree in physical education and fine arts, and later attended Meiji University in Tokyo in 1960 as a special research student. In 1964, Campbell competed in the Olympic Games as captain of the U.S. Judo Team.

Motorcycle enthusiasts everywhere will remember Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell as more than their legislative

**RIDERS FOR JUSTICE S.** warrior, but as a fellow biker who rode his Harley to work in the Nation's Capital, to events, and throughout Colorado, including the Four Corners Iron Horse Rally which he founded. Thanks for everything, Ben, best wishes and we'll see ya down the road?



**2004 RFJ membership drive winners**  
Left to right: Miss Vicki, Wizz, RFJ VP Carl Dodson, and Rusty. Congratulations!!

*"If someone is so fearful that, that they're going to start using their weapons to protect their rights, makes me very nervous that these people have these weapons at all." Representative Henry Waxman and communist traitor.*

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## MRF News

**TEA Extended for Sixty Days:** The Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) has learned that the U.S. House of Representatives passed a 60-day extension for the current Transportation Equity Act (TEA) and the U.S. Senate approved that extension late last week. This 60-day extension replaces the previous 4-month extension passed by the House, and gives them time to work out the details of this critical piece of legislation before voting on their 6-year reauthorization bill. As the MRF announced a couple of weeks ago, the Senate already passed its version of TEA reauthorization on February 12.

The MRF is continuing to work with key legislators to ensure that our motorcycle safety initiatives will be included in the final mark-up of the House version of TEA. It is anticipated that the House will be reviewing TEA in various committees and sub-committees for mark-up around the middle of March. Once the House version is finalized and passed, both the House and Senate versions will go to conference to work out the differences between the two.

The reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act remains the most pressing issue at this time for the Motorcycle Riders Foundation. Naturally, we will continue to keep you informed throughout the reauthorization process.

**MRF Introduces Young Activist Scholarship Fund:** Rider activists have recognized for some time that our membership and leaders are aging, and that there is a need to encourage younger people to become involved in motorcyclists' rights. To that end, the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) is pleased to announce that we have created a scholarship fund to recognize deserving candidates under the age of 31 who

otherwise may not be able to attend the MRF's Meeting of the Minds conference.

The MRF has dedicated a limited amount of seed money to the scholarship fund to get things rolling. We are looking for additional contributions from individuals, national, state and local organizations and businesses that would like to participate in the program. You can visit the MRF website at [www.mrf.org/yascholarship.php](http://www.mrf.org/yascholarship.php) to make an on-line donation to the MRF Young Activist Scholarship Fund. Checks made out to the MRF Young Activist Scholarship Fund can be sent to: MRF Young Activist Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 1808, Washington, DC 20013.

Nominations for the MRF Young Activist Scholarship will be accepted from either state or local state motorcyclists' rights organization (SMRO) groups, and must be submitted on an MRF-approved application form. You can use the application form on page 3 of the March/April issue of the MRF REPORTS, or you can visit the MRF website at [www.mrf.org/yascholarship.php](http://www.mrf.org/yascholarship.php) for a printable form in either text or pdf format.

### CANDIDATE CRITERIA:

- Nominated candidates must be thirty (30) years of age or younger on the first full day of that year's Meeting of the Minds.
- Candidates must be a member in good standing of an SMRO. No time requirement for length of membership in an SMRO is required.
- Candidates must be nominated by their SMRO. Nominations will be accepted from either state or local (district/chapter) SMRO groups, and must be submitted on an MRF-approved application form.

- Nominations must be submitted between March 15 and July 15 during the year in question.

- Candidates are encouraged - but not required - to submit a three hundred (300) word essay on why bikers' rights are important to them. Should nominated candidates choose to submit an essay, they must do so no later than August 1 of the year in question.

- Winning candidates will be announced via an MRF E-Mail News Release on or about August 15. All candidates will also received notification via the U.S. Postal Service, regardless of whether they were selected or not.

### WHAT DO WINNING CANDIDATES RECEIVE?

- One-year membership to the Motorcycle Riders Foundation, effective the first full day of the Meeting of the Minds during the year in question.

- Round-trip airfare to the MRF's Meeting of the Minds conference, or alternate travel expenses so long as those expenses in total do not exceed

the cost of traveling by air. If an alternative mode of transportation is chosen, candidates will be required to provide receipts in order to be reimbursed (receipts will be accepted for tickets on other modes of transportation, hotel accommodations, gasoline and food purchased while traveling to and from the Meeting of the Minds conference). If there is any question about acceptable travel expenses, it is the responsibility of the candidate to check with the MRF prior to incurring said expenses.

- Hotel accommodations at the Meeting of the Minds conference. Accommodations will include the hotel room only. Telephone, food, movie rentals, etc. will be the sole responsibility of winning candidates.

- Meeting of the Minds conference registration and banquet fees waived.


- Special recognition at the MRF's Meeting of the Minds conference. Said recognition will include a plaque, presentation of one-year membership, and other items or activities as approved by the MRF Board of Directors.

Questions about the MRF Young Activist Scholarship Fund should be directed to MRF Scholarship Committee Chair Miles France at [miles@mrf.org](mailto:miles@mrf.org).

**MRF Announces New Vice President of Government Relations:** The Motorcycle Riders Foundation is pleased to announce that Jeff Hennie has accepted the position of MRF Vice President of Government Relations, effective April 5, 2004. Jeff has spent the past five years working as a legislative assistant for Congresswoman Judy Biggert (R-IL), monitoring legislative activity on the House floor and advising Congresswoman Biggert on environmental, technology and defense issues. His familiarity with the federal legislative process and the contacts he has made on Capitol Hill will be a huge asset for the MRF as we forge ahead with our legislative agenda.

Jeff has been involved in political activities for many years, working on numerous campaigns, serving as a presidential inaugural committee member and serving as congressional liaison as an Illinois State Society board member. He has a B.S. in Environmental Biology, which offers him key insight into the Environmental Protection Agency's motorcycle emissions standards. Jeff is an MRF member and a rider, and he and his wife live in Washington, DC.

"I am pleased to welcome Jeff Hennie to the MRF's most key position," said MRF President Karen Bolin. "After meeting and talking with Jeff several times, I am certain that he will work for motorcyclists' rights with passion and energy. Before the MRF selection committee made its final decision, Jeff had the opportunity to meet members of ABATE of Iowa and Illinois while they were in DC last week, as well as several MRF board members. After conferring with the MRF's selection committee and several veteran SMRO leaders, I am confident that Jeff meets all of the qualifications that motorcyclists' rights activists have come to expect from the MRF Vice



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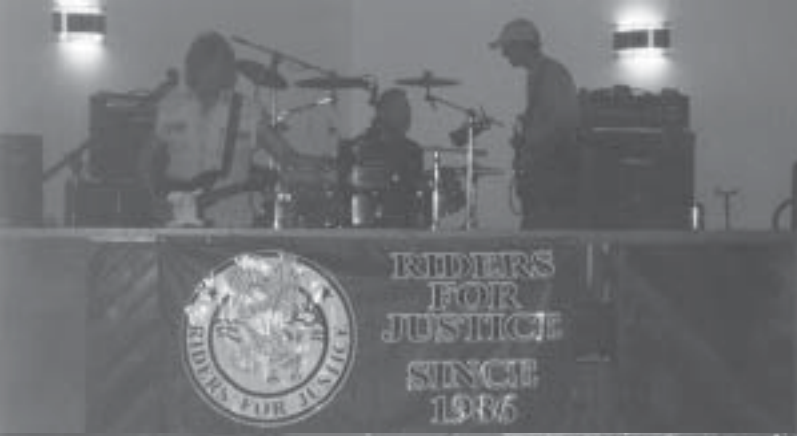
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President of Government Relations, and we are fortunate to have someone with his outstanding credentials.”

“As your new MRF Vice President of Government Relations, I look forward to helping advance the Motorcycle Riders Foundation’s agenda and protecting motorcyclists’ rights across the country,” said Jeff Hennie. “I pledge to every member of the MRF my loyalty, skill, fortitude and concentration. I am honored to be part of this great organization.”

Jeff will be in attendance at the MRF’s BEAST of the East conference in Canandaigua, New York. It’s not too late to register for the BEAST at [www.mrf.org/events.php](http://www.mrf.org/events.php) so that you can be among the first to meet Jeff in person!

Please join the MRF Board of Directors in welcoming Jeff Hennie as the Motorcycle Riders Foundation’s Vice President of Government Relations!

*After a long night of making love Harry rolls over and was looking around when he noticed a framed picture of another man on the night stand by the bed. Naturally, Harry began to worry and plan his escape route if needed. “Is this your husband?” he inquired nervously. “No, silly,” she replied, snuggling up to him. “Your boyfriend then?” he asked. “No, not at all,” she said, nibbling away at his ear. “Is it your dad or your brother?” he said, hoping to be reassured. “No, no, no!!!” she said. “Well, who is he then?” Harry demanded. Calmly, the girl replied, “That’s me before the surgery.”*

**The American Motorcyclist Association (AMA)** has announced “Justice for All,” a new nationwide initiative that will focus on inadequate sentencing of car drivers who seriously injure or kill motorcyclists.

“Justice for All” will advocate legislation establishing tougher penalties when traffic offenses or criminal actions by other motorists result in a motorcyclist’s death or serious injury, a move that also would benefit other vulnerable road users such as bicyclists and pedestrians. The program will include cooperation with state and local motorcycling organizations, efforts by AMA Community Councils, and a variety of opportunities for individual motorcyclists and other concerned citizens to become involved.

“Justice for All” also will feature events that coincide with the 2004 Black Hills Rally in Sturgis, South Dakota.

More details about “Justice for All” will be announced soon on the AMA’s website, [AMADirectlink.com](http://AMADirectlink.com), and in American Motorcyclist magazine.

**US Forest Service** Chief Dale Bosworth has identified unmanaged recreation, especially the undesirable impacts from off-highway vehicles (OHVs), as one of the key threats facing the Nation’s Forests and grasslands today.

Concerns have been expressed over the number of unplanned roads and trails, erosion, lack of quality OHV recreation opportunities, water degradation and habitat destruction from OHV activity. In response to this issue Chief Bosworth has chartered two National Teams to develop contemporary policy and tools to address this issue effectively at the field level.

The current focus is on expediting the transitioning of the agency towards a policy of designated routes for OHVs. The policy being developed would require OHVs to stay on designated roads, trails, and specifically defined use areas.

The policy development is focusing on three key issues: moving the agency to a system of designated routes for OHV activity to minimize or eliminate the impacts from current unmanaged use, generally prohibiting cross-country travel by OHVs, and completing OHV designation decisions at the field level.

The OHV Implementation Team will develop and provide tools, techniques and best practices associated with managing OHVs provide a good opportunity to explore public lands.

Over the last 30 years use has gone from about 5 million riders to about 36 million in 2000. The soaring use of OHVs on public lands has meant that even the smallest amount of use off of planned Forest roads and trails has created considerable impacts to the environment.



Improved OHV management on National Forest system lands will allow the Forest Service to ensure it provides the public with high-quality motorized recreation opportunity without compromising basic forest resources. (US Forest Service)

**Oregon** Motorcyclists can now use three headlights on their motorcycles whereas in the past, two was the maximum allowed. They will also be able to use auxiliary lights, either fog lights or driving lights, at all times if the auxiliary lights are no brighter than the headlight and the auxiliary lights are aimed correctly. All other vehicles in Oregon must turn off their auxiliary lights during times when the law requires drivers to dim their high beam headlights. Finally Oregon riders may use an intermittent pulsing or flashing brake light, as long as the flashing does not interfere with the rear turn signal function. With the help of legislators that are motorcyclists themselves, these new options were passed and signed by Governor Kulongoski.

**Tennessee** Senate Bill 2282, introduced by Senator Tommy Kilby (D- Morgan County), the “Tennessee Volunteer Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Act” provides for state registration (\$10 per year) for persons possessing a valid combination hunting and fishing license, hunting license, or sportsman license. The funds received under this legislation will be used exclusively for the purpose of funding the operation and management of the off-highway volunteer motor vehicle program.

**Washington, DC** City Council has approved the Distracted Driving Act of 2003 by a 13-1 vote. Any distracted behavior by drivers, including cell phone use, will be prohibited, effective July 1, 2004. First time offenders will receive warnings; subsequent offenses will be subject to a \$100 fine per violation. The law specifically exempts police and emergency medical technicians during an incident.

**The Ohio** Farm Bureau Federation says it will develop legislation to require ATVs to display a motorcycle-style registration plate. The Bureau claims that a visible ATV-registration number is necessary to identify ATV-mounted trespassers who damage farmlands. Once a bill has been introduced it will be posted to the “Rights” page of [www.AMADirectLink.com](http://www.AMADirectLink.com).

**Massachusetts** Governor Mitt Romney has signed legislation that provides exception that no protective head gear be required if a motorcyclist is participating in a properly permitted public parade and is 18 years or older.

Bay State riders grateful for this action should contact the Governor’s office and let him know you appreciate his signing this bill at; Governor Mitt Romney, State House, Office of the Governor, Room 360, Boston, MA 02133, Phone: 617-725-4005 or by email: [GOffice@state.ma.us](mailto:GOffice@state.ma.us). While you are expressing your gratitude drop in a line to support passage of Senate Bill 1363, which modifies the helmet law in favor of full choice.

**Vermont** drivers who operate their vehicles without insurance or accumulate sufficient points to warrant a driver license or operating privilege suspension may face an addi-

Continued on page 9



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tional one-year suspension if a death or serious bodily injury is involved. House Bill 496, prefiled by Representative Mary Morrissey (R - Bennington), seeks to hold motor vehicle operators more accountable for their actions. You can show your support for H-496 by writing the Honorable Mary Morrissey, 228 Dewey Street, Bennington, VT 05201, sending e-mail to [mmorrissey@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:mmorrissey@leg.state.vt.us), calling 802-442-2092, or composing and sending a letter of support in the "StateWatch" section on the "Rights" page at [www.AMADirectlink.com](http://www.AMADirectlink.com).

**The British Motorcyclists Federation**, Land Access and Recreation Association, Trail Riders Fellowship and United Kingdom (UK) Trail Riders have joined forces to fight proposals by the Government to ban off-highway motorcycles from 6,000 miles of the UK's green lanes.

The threat to one of the fastest growing areas of biking comes from a government consultation paper, 'Use of mechanically propelled vehicles on Rights of Way', issued by Rural Affairs Minister Alun Michael.

The ancient rights-of-way that trail riders legally ride on at present were originally established to provide travel on open countryside and on footpaths and bridleways and give them an alternative place to go. But the trails will become off-limits if this proposal does become law.

This proposal is part of the fallout from the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 - the Act that introduced the 'right to roam' for hikers across thousands of square miles of private

land - and is largely driven by a vocal and influential minority that wants motorcycles and cars out of 'their' countryside - completely.

England and Wales have around 120,000 miles of footpaths and bridleways where motorcyclists cannot go. There are around 5,000 additional miles of minor, unsealed vehicular road and, of course, walkers, cyclists and riders also enjoy much of this. (*MCN.com*)

**New York** riders need to express or renew their commitment to right-of-way legislation by contacting your Assemblymember in support of A-8095 and S-2178, both currently in the Assembly Transportation Committee. By clicking on the AMA "StateWatch" selection of the "Rights" page at [www.AMADirectlink.com](http://www.AMADirectlink.com) you can send a letter in support of these bills.

**The 2004 edition** of the *Pocket Guide to Transportation* has been released by the Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS). This, the seventh edition, provides a wide range of information related to transportation in the United States including the infrastructure, safety and security, mobility, and economic impact.

Copies of the new addition are available free from BTS by phone 202-366-3282 or e-mail [orders@bts.gov](mailto:orders@bts.gov). The guide is also available on [www.bts.gov](http://www.bts.gov).

**Many State** Legislators and the US Congress are reviewing legislation that recognizes May 2004 as Motorcycle Awareness and You Month. These include Georgia (HR 1101, SR 673), Massachusetts (HB 1202), North Carolina (HB 54), New Jersey (AJR 63, SCR 76), Oklahoma (SJR 50) and United States Senate Resolution 168 to create the National Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month. For more information go to [www.AMADirectlink.com](http://www.AMADirectlink.com).

**RIDERS FOR JUSTICE**

**AirWear, Ltd.** ([www.airvest.com](http://www.airvest.com)) has contracted with Direct Impact Inc. ([www.dirimpact.com](http://www.dirimpact.com)) to market and provide distribution for its AirVest(TM) products, AirWear's patented line of inflatable motorcycle safety vests that protect a rider's upper body and vital organs in the event of a crash.

They cite the latest available figures from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), that crashes involving motorcycles account for 7.6 percent of total traffic fatalities on America's roadways. In addition, motorcyclists are about 26 times as likely to die in a crash as someone riding in a passenger car, and are 5 times as likely to be injured and "Personal protection is the best weapon against injury when a crash does occur," in their sales pitch.

**Mississippi** House Bill 807, introduced by Representative Jamie R. Franks, Jr. (D- Lee, Itawamba, Tishomingo) and Charles Jim Beckett (R- Calhoun, Lafayette, Marshall, Yalobusha), along with Senate Bill 2013, sponsored by Senator Bob M. Dearing (D-Natchez) will establish the Motorcycle Safety and Operator Training Program.

Magnolia State riders will be levied an additional annual \$5.00 fee on each motorcycle and additional \$1.00 for a temporary motorcycle operator's permit, and/or renewing a motorcycle endorsement to be deposited into the Motorcycle Safety Operator Training Fund.

The program also includes activities to increase motorcyclists' alcohol and drug effects awareness, motorcycle driver

**Continued on page 10**



**RFJ member Liliias Jarding, Dever Metro RFJ VP Tiger Chandler, Colorado Representative Angie Paccione, and RFJ President Darrin Trussel at the Denver Swap Meet. RFJ members spent time with Rep. Paccione to convince her that CO bikers do not need a helmet law.**

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improvement efforts, program promotion activities, and other efforts to enhance motorcycle safety through education, including enhancement of public awareness of motorcycles.

Applicants for a motorcycle endorsement or a restricted motorcycle operator's license would be exempt from the licensing knowledge test and skill test if they present satisfactory evidence of successful completion of an approved rider training course which includes a similar test of both knowledge and skill.

**The efforts of Washington** organizations, including the Northwest Motorcycle Association, Northwest Quad Association, Skagit Motorcycle Club and the Timber Tamers 4WD Club, in partnership with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has lead to the limited re-opening of Walker Valley OHV Area.

The trail system was closed to all ORV use on November 1, 2002. Re-opening was originally scheduled for April 1, 2003. Through cooperative efforts of user groups and the DNR, a limited number of trails will be returned to use early. About half of the trails will remain closed to either protect resources or allow for on-going logging activities. Many of the trails closed for resource protection will be opened for use on April 1, 2003.

**Missouri** House of Representatives Transportation Committee, on a vote of 19 yes and 1 present, have passed HB 1080 (Motorcyclists Matter legislation know as "Clutch's Law"). They also voted in favor of both helmet modification bills, HB 1109 (13 to 7) and 770 (14 to 6) and asked that they be combined on the House floor.

This comes only days after hearing testimony from the Missouri Safety Center, Missouri Safety Council, Freedom Of Road Riders, Inc. of Missouri, the Motorcycle Riders Foundation and the American Motorcyclist Association.

**British** motorcycle commuters around London are calling on their government to publicly recognize the benefits of traffic congestion relief from motorcycles. A year after local authorities began charging tolls, yet exempting motorcycles, for those entering central London the streets are safer.

Despite a 20 percent increase in motorcycle traffic in the city there has been a 15 percent fall in motorcycle casualties. Yet motorcycle sales are up 20 percent in London. All while the average speed of traffic in central London has risen by 15 percent. (MCN.com)

## Nebraska Helmet Law Help Needed!

### Abate of Nebraska

Nebraska needs your help! LB303 is a helmet law revocation bill we are currently trying to pass in our Unicameral. It has been tabled to gather enough votes for cloture (a call for an immediate vote to stop a sure filibuster). We need the speaker to put our bill back on the agenda. He is Senator Bromm cbromm@unicam.state.ne.us. We also need to assure we have enough votes to pass after cloture. This is a link to our senators page on our website - <http://www.abateofne.com/senators.htm>. Please help us to get this ridiculous law revoked.

*Let the people think they govern and they will be governed.*  
- WILLIAM PENN (1693)

## Messing with the Constitution

Neal Boortz - townhall.com

**March 19, 2004** There is a move a foot in the Congress to essentially change the way the United States Constitution is amended. Eleven Republican congressmen have decided that the old system of congressional passage coupled with state ratification is just too cumbersome for this enlightened age. Their idea? To simply allow the House and Senate to amend our Constitution with a simple two-thirds majority vote.

We'll cover the methodology in a moment; first the motivation. These 11 stalwart defenders of our constitution, led by Representative Ron Lewis (R-KY) have decided that they've had it up to just about here (gesturing around my eyebrows) with what they call judicial activism. They are particularly concerned over the prospects of legal gay marriage. I think it would also be safe to say that they are less than thrilled over the prospect of the phrase "under God" being taken out of our Pledge of Allegiance.

Fair enough. The Supreme Court has been a bit feisty in the last few decades. Some think they've taken Al Gores "The Constitution should be a living, breathing document" routine a bit far. In the mid-1990s the court breathed the idea into our body of Constitutional law that local governments could take your home away from you and transfer it to some heavy campaign contributors who promise to bulldoze the house you were born and raised in and replace it with a cluster-mansion that will pay more in property taxes. Somehow I missed that part of the Constitution when I was studying law.

I do remember seeing something in the Constitution about amendments though. Perhaps Representative Lewis has heard of it. It seems the people of this country, acting through their federal and local elected officials, can amend the Constitution if they feel that the courts have gone just a bit too far in their activist roles.

Well, here's what Lewis and his 11 Republican cohorts have dreamed up. Just last week they introduced H.R. 3920 which they call the "Congressional Accountability for Judicial Activism Act of 2004. This legislation would allow the congress to overturn any Supreme Court decision on the constitutionality of an act of Congress by a two-thirds majority vote. Simply put, H.R. 3920 would allow the Congress of the United States to amend our Constitution by a two-third vote of both houses. No involvement from the Executive branch, and no vetting through the states and the people. Just pass a law, wait for the Supremes to declare it unconstitutional, and then amend the Constitution with your two-thirds vote.

This might seem like a wonderful idea to Republicans at a time when they control both houses. But ... consider this scenario. Let's say the people of the United States suddenly succumb to a nationwide epidemic of mad voter disease and place the Democrats in full and complete control of both houses. The Democrats immediately pass a law making it a felony for any private citizen in the United States to own a firearm. Since government is the only entity in our system entitled to use force to accomplish its goals, the Democrats reason that government should be the only entity with the means to exert force. Along comes the Supreme Court and, in a rare exercise of reasonable Constitutional interpretation, declares the law to be at variance with the dictates of the Second Amendment. The Democrats merely produce their two-third votes in the Senate and the House and, voila, the Constitution is amended!

Consider another scenario: The entire congress, mindful of its constant struggle for self-preservation, passes a law stating that all congressional and Senatorial terms shall be for

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life. As soon as the court declares this absurdity to be unconstitutional the House and Senate votes almost unanimously to overrule the Supreme Court ... and once again the Constitution is amended.

H.R. 3920 is, of course, going absolutely nowhere. It's the Dennis Kucinich of legislation. A somewhat nutty one percent might consider taking this tramp to dinner, but nobody's going to pick up the check. These Republicans are merely staking out some election-year territory in which they can claim to be the saviors of the American family and all that good and right with the world.

The outrage here is that eleven Republican members of the Congress of the United States have so little regard and respect for our Constitution that they would actually put their names on this insult. You would normally expect this depraved behavior from Democrats or the local mob. The offense, though, is so grave the guilty parties must be identified. See if one of these names is familiar to you. We have Lewis of Kentucky, Howard of North Carolina, DeMint of South Carolina, Kingston and Collins of Georgia, Everett of Alabama, Dolittle and Pombo of California, Franks of Arizona, Hefley of Colorado, Goode of Virginia and Pitts of Pennsylvania.

During this election year, when we have the likes of John Kerry plotting to surrender the sovereignty of the United States to the machinations of the United Nations, our Constitution needs every friend it can get. Lewis's eleven don't fit the bill.

Neal Boortz is a lawyer and nationally syndicated radio talk show host.

## Assaulting the 1994 Ban

By John R. Lott Jr.

With the first sniper trial of John Muhammad getting started, the one-year anniversary recalls the horrors and fear. There are also legislative attempts underway to ensure that it never happens again. Two Democratic presidential candidates, Congressmen Richard Gephardt (D-MO) and Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), have used the anniversary to introduce legislation demanding that the federal assault weapons ban be renewed and expanded before it expires next year. Lawmakers in Maryland are now requesting that over 40 different guns be added to the list of banned assault weapons. Legislators in other states are following suit.

In the gun-control debate, labels are often misleading: The "assault weapon ban" is no different, conjuring up images of machine guns, a view encouraged by the news media, which typically show machine guns in their stories on the ban. Yet, the 1994 federal assault weapon ban had nothing to do with machine guns, only semi-automatics that fire one bullet per pull of the trigger. Rebuilding semi-automatic weapons into machine guns is very difficult, as completely different firing

**Continued from page 10**  
mechanisms are used. It is easier to replace the entire gun than to re-engineer a semi-automatic gun.

Functionally, the banned guns are the same as other non-banned semi-automatic guns, firing the exact same bullets with the same rapidity and producing the exact same damage. The ban arbitrarily outlaws some guns based upon their name or cosmetic features, such as whether the gun could have a bayonet attached.

The media's focus now is on the so-called sniper rifle. Yet, the .223-caliber Bushmaster rifle used in the sniper killings was neither a sniper rifle nor an "assault weapon." In fact, it is such a low-powered rifle that in most states it is illegal to use it for even deer hunting precisely because of its low power, too frequently wounding and not killing deer.

Why anyone would think that assault weapon bans would reduce crime is a mystery. In theory, if so-called "assault weapons" are preferred by criminals to commit crime but are seldom used by citizens to stop crime, banning the whole class could reduce crime. But since most guns are semi-automatic, such a ban would cover most guns. However, banning a few semi-automatic guns might very well only change the brand of gun that criminals use.

The law never had much of an effect. Despite simultaneously praising the ban as being responsible for the drop in violent crime during the 1990s, President Clinton, who signed the "assault weapon ban" into law, complained in 1998 how easy it had been for gun manufacturers to continue selling the banned guns simply by changing the guns' names or by making the necessary cosmetic changes.

Ironically, the banned guns were seldom used in crime to begin with. A 1995 study of the early 1990s by the Clinton administration showed that fewer than 1 percent of state and federal inmates carried "military-type" semi-automatic guns (a much broader set of guns than those banned by the law) when they committed a crime. A 1997 survey showed no reduction in the criminal use of this type of gun after the ban.

Only two studies have been conducted of the federal law's impact on crime, one of which also examined the state assault-weapons laws. One study was funded by the Clinton administration and examined just the first year the law was in effect. It concluded that, "the ban's short-term impact on gun violence has been uncertain."

The second study is found in my book *The Bias Against Guns*. It examines the first four years of the federal law as well as the different state assault-weapon bans. Even after accounting for law enforcement, demographics, poverty and other factors that affect crime, the laws did not reduce any type of violent crime. In fact, overall violent crime actually rose slightly by 1.5 percent, but the impact was not statisti-

cally significant. The somewhat larger increase in murder rates was significant.

The data from the five states with assault weapons bans show no overall benefit, with seemingly random results: violent crime rose in California and Hawaii, remained unchanged in Massachusetts, and fell in Maryland and New Jersey.

The only clear result of the bans was to consistently reduce the number of gun shows by about 25 percent. Features such as bayonets mounts on guns may not mean much to criminals, but gun collectors sure seem to like them.

The purpose of limiting a law to a set period is presumably to test it, to see if it lives up to its promises. The bans have now been in effect for almost a decade, without any evidence of any benefits.

*Lott, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of The Bias Against Guns (Regnery 2003).*

**Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, and Al Gore were in an airplane that crashed. They're up in heaven, and God's sitting on the great white throne. God addresses Al first: "Al, what do you believe in?"**

**Al replies, "Well, I believe I won that election, but that it was your will that I did not serve. And I've come to understand that now."**

**God thinks for a second and says "Okay, very good. Come and sit at my left." God then addresses Bill. "Bill, what do you believe in?"**

**Bill replies, "I believe in forgiveness. I've sinned, but I've never held a grudge against my fellow man, and I hope no grudges are held against me."**

**God thinks for a second and says "You are forgiven, my son. Come and sit at my right." God then addresses Hillary. "Hillary, what do you believe in?"**

**"I believe you're in my chair."**

**"I have little interest in streamlining government or in making it more efficient, for I mean to reduce its size. I do not undertake to promote welfare, for I propose to extend freedom. My aim is not to pass laws, but to repeal them. It is not to inaugurate new programs, but to cancel old ones that do violence to the Constitution, or that have failed in their purpose, or that impose on the people an unwarranted financial burden. I will not attempt to discover whether legislation is 'needed' before I have first determined whether it is constitutionally permissible. And if I should later be attacked for neglecting my constituents' interests, I shall reply that I was informed their main interest is liberty and that in that cause I am doing the very best I can." —Barry Goldwater**

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