



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor

Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety

ODOT Transportation Safety

235 Union Street NE

Salem, OR 97301-1054

Phone: (503) 986-4190

Fax: (503) 986-3143

March 22, 2012

Governor John A. Kitzhaber, M.D.
160 State Capitol
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301-4047

**Re: GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MOTORCYCLE SAFETY
("the Committee") ANNUAL REPORT - 2011**

Dear Governor Kitzhaber:

2011 was a year of refining our recent legislative successes. In order to facilitate the minimum training mandate during passed in 2009, the Committee worked to pass Senate Bill ("SB") 133. SB 133 allows persons who apply for an endorsement limiting their riding to motorcycles with more than two wheels to be exempted from the requirement to complete an approved motorcycle rider education course. The bill passed in June.

The Committee opposed SB 162, which would have reduced the fee for renewing a driver's license with motorcycle endorsement from \$28 to \$14. SB 162 never advanced past its introduction.

SB 463 would have allowed a form of lane sharing among motorcycles. It also never advanced past introduction. The Committee is mixed in its views on lane sharing and continues to study the issue.

House Bill ("HB") 2232 would have prohibited (with exception) a person under seven years of age from riding a motorcycle. HB 2232 never advanced beyond its introduction. The Committee did not take a position on the bill.

HB 3072 would have required all vehicles to light their headlights on state roads. It never advanced past its introduction. The Committee did not support HB 3072, concluding the conspicuity of a motorcycle with its headlight lighted is reduced if all vehicle headlights are lighted.

HB 3141 would have limited motorcycle helmet use to those operators and riders under 21 years of age. It also never advanced past its introduction. The Committee remains firmly opposed to any rollback of the current helmet law.

Team Oregon

Team Oregon trained 10,288 students in 2011, a 17% increase over 2010. 2011 was the second year of the mandatory training law phase-in; all new motorcyclists under the age of 31 were required to take an approved rider education course. Many of those seeking the required training are opting to take the shorter and less expensive Intermediate Rider Training course (“IRT”); IRT trainings were up 248% during the year compared to an increase of nearly 20% among students taking the Basic Rider Training course. In 2012, the law requires all new riders under 41 years of age take an approved course to secure their endorsement.

Transportation Safety Action Plan (“TSAP”)

In June, the Committee assisted ODOT in revising its Transportation Safety Action Plan. Of 94 actions to be considered, seven were directly related to motorcycling. The Committee recommended five of the seven be retained. These actions included:

- Continue to consider safety – including the special needs of motorcyclists, bicyclists, and pedestrians – in all road maintenance functions. Motorcyclist special needs include:
 - anti-skid surfaces (e.g., paint and construction plates);
 - at-grade transitions;
 - removal of gravel applied when conditions are icy.
- Continue to support the expansion and increase in stature of local transportation safety programs.
- Key Infrastructure Safety Areas should include, but not be limited to the following:
 - Rural Non-Signalized Intersection Crashes
 - High Speed Signalized Intersection Crashes.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a .00 BAC standard of impairment for motorcycle operators and introduce legislation to adjust the standard to the optimum level.
- Work with public works directors and ODOT staff to improve surface conditions for motorcyclists in work zones and other areas.

Two additional actions addressed minimum personal protective gear requirements for motorcycle riders and equipment standards for motorcyclists. The Committee suggested that these actions be removed from the TSAP.

Committee Membership

During 2011, three long-standing members saw their second terms expire. **Jim Wyffels** of McMinnville has served since April 2001. **David Belton** of Corvallis and **Jim Stewart** of Klamath Falls have served since June 2003; Mr. Stewart also served as Committee Chair from

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October 2004 to October 2009. In addition, **Iris Yeager** resigned from the Committee in November 2011. She had served the Committee since February 2005.

Peggy Munsell of Gervais was appointed in September 2011 to fill Mr. Wyffels seat. A second appointee, **Peter Russell** of Bend, has been tentatively appointed to replace Ms. Yeager. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Belton have agreed to serve until their replacements are appointed.

The Committee appreciates the insight, energy, and commitment Mr. Belton, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Wyffels, and Ms. Yeager have offered over the years. Civic involvement is often thankless, anonymous work. Our efforts have been improved by their contributions.

Finally, all of us are proud that our efforts continue to make roads safer for Oregon motorists. In 2010, we noted that 38 motorcyclist fatalities was the lowest number since 2004. In 2011, **40 motorcyclists lost their lives in 39 accidents**. While more than in 2010, the 2011 deaths are the second-lowest total since 2004 and almost 10% below the 2004-2011 average. Still, the number is way too high – especially when you consider that nearly half the fatalities are single-vehicle accidents.

Respectfully submitted,



David W. Peterson, Chair
17780 S. Anderson Rd.
Oregon City, OR 97045
dwp.irs@gmail.com
(503)327-5592

cc: Kendall Clawson, Governor's Office
bcc: Troy E. Costales, ODOT
Michele A. O'Leary, ODOT