

## Motorcycle Safety Awareness Fund

Several motorcycle groups supported Representative Tedder's legislation, HB 4306, which increased funding for the Motorcycle Safety Fund and created a new Motorcycle Awareness Fund. This bill had bipartisan support with 23 co-sponsors. 13 Republicans and 10 Democrats. The Michigan Department of State's (MDOS) representative was "neutral" at the Public hearings regarding an increase only on motorcycle plates and endorsements. Paid by motorcyclists for motorcyclists. The legislation was passed and signed by Governor Snyder in July of 2017. This was not a piece of cake bill. Some legislators considered it to be a tax increase because of the increase in motorcycle fee's. ABATE of Michigan looked at it as a user fee increase to benefit the user. The Motorcycle Safety Fund has provided low cost hands on rider training for thousands of Michigan motorcycle riders since 1984. That program services all riders but mostly new riders. The MDOS Rider Education Program has been working on reducing the large percentage of unendorsed motorcycle riders that show up in Michigan Motorcyclists fatalities each and every year.

The Awareness Fund that was created in this legislation is new for Michigan. "Look Twice - Save a Life. Motorcycles Are Everywhere." Is a slogan used across the country by many motorcycle rights groups. The Pennsylvania DOT hands out thousands of signs each and every riding season paid for by PA motorcyclists. Many other states have used federal funds to support motorcycle awareness. "Safe to Sturgis" was a NHSTA promotion with 8 states which helped to reduce motorcycle fatalities for riders on the way to the Sturgis motorcycle rally.

Page 2, of Public Act 115 states, "The secretary of state shall expend money from the fund for the purpose of creating and maintaining a "look twice-save a life" program that promotes motorcycle awareness, safety, and education."

ABATE of Michigan was the strongest supporter and did the majority of the "leg work" to get this legislation passed. Then in the fall of 2017 it became apparent that the MDOS could not implement the legislation due to their obsolete computer system which was still using the "Cobalt" operating system. Senator Casperson then introduced Senate Bill 575 to adjust the fee increases so collection could begin in 2018. No collection, no funds. Public Act 238 calls the Motorcycle Awareness program "look twice -save a life" in the bill language.

No money was spent by MDOS for Motorcycle Awareness in 2018. Their plan for the Motorcycle Awareness Fund was NEVER discussed in the Legislature and is a money grab by MDOS to do “research” and to spend money on developing that are already available to Michigan from other states. MDOS has put out a 13 page contract to hire an ad agency to spend the Motorcycle Awareness Fund. No legislator, motorcyclist, or public input, was contacted or are a part of the MDOS plan. Legislative Intent was clear!! Money to be raised by motorcyclists increasing their fee’s for the current motorcycle safety training program and a separate fund for Motorcycle AWARENESS. The MDOS hiring an Ad Agency, paying for research on distracted drivers, is not part of the legislative intent. There were no committee hearings, testimony, on the house floor debate, anywhere except at MDOS. ABATE may not be able to prevent this, “money grab,” but we will inform the new governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, all of the Michigan legislators and the public of the department abuse of earmarked funds paid for by motorcyclists.