



Scribes Legislative Voice



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ABATE OF FLORIDA, INC.

Happy Thanksgiving everyone! This month the Legislative Voice is focusing on the “legislative process” and how we can influence it. In the October issue, I gave examples of different ways to reach out to your legislator. This month you will learn about the process and see why it is important for us to be vigilant all along the way. The legislative process is a long and perilous journey for a Bill, yet there are many places where we can help to advance or stop a Bill.

DARRIN “SCRIBE” BROOKS, *State Legislative Trustee*, ABATE of Florida, Inc.

How We Can Influence the Legislative Process.

The first line of the ABATE of Florida, Inc. mission statement is that we “lobby and educate the government and the general public to promote motorcycling in a safe and positive image.” Lobbying and educating the legislators IS how we influence the legislative process and it is something that all of us must strive to do. But how do we do that?

First, we must be informed about our rights as motorcyclists and learn about the legislation that we seek to promote or defeat. We also must be knowledgeable about the process it takes for a Bill to become a Law. When you know about the issues and about the long pathway the Bill will travel, you will be better equipped to provide a little bit of influence at just the right time.

We also influence the process by developing a relationship with our legislators. Most will openly admit that they do not know everything about all

the Bills each session. When you have a good relationship you can step up and help educate them and their staff about the issues that will either negatively or positively affect motorcyclists. We cannot help them if they do not know who we are. By reaching out to them early and establishing ourselves as members of Florida’s largest motorcycle rights organization, you provide the credibility to help influence the process.

Finally, you cannot influence the process if you do not participate in the process. You must e-mail and/or call your legislators office when asked to help. Our lobbyist, Doc Reichenbach, will testify at the committee hearings, but we will also need your call and/or e-mail. As the Bill goes into a committee, I will send out a notice to those Chapters whose legislators are on the committee. It will take several calls, for the path is long, but what is five minutes out of your life to help provide a little influence?

“Success always comes when Preparation meets Opportunity.”

~ Henry Hartman

The above quote gives a great example of how a united band of bikers can influence the legislative process. The past few months we have been preparing by reaching out and inviting our legislators to our Chapter meetings. We have been getting to know them and educating them about who we are and what ABATE of Florida, Inc is all about. We are prepared to reach out to our legislators by phone, e-mail, or in person. Now we just need to make the most of the opportunities when they present themselves this legislative season. On the second page, I have re-printed, with permission, from the Clerk of the Florida House of Representatives a wonderful flow chart explaining how a Bill becomes a Law. Keep it handy this session so you can follow the Bills we are watching.



How An Idea Becomes A Law



CONCERNED CITIZEN
Legislator or group suggests legislation

REPRESENTATIVE
decides to introduce bill

BILL DRAFTING SERVICE
writes bill or reviews for style

BILL NUMBERED AND FILED

"FIRST READING"
by publication in Journal

BILL REFERRED BY SPEAKER
to Council, Committee or Calendar of the House

BILL IS AGENDAED AND NOTICED BY COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE
for hearings
Council or Committee reports action to Clerk:
House Bill:
1. favorably
2. favorably with recommended council or committee substitute
3. unfavorably
Senate Bill:
1. favorably
2. favorably with amendment(s)
3. unfavorably



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Transmit by Message to **SENATE SECRETARY** for Senate process

RETURNED TO HOUSE
without amendments with amendments

HOUSE concurs
HOUSE further amends or HOUSE refuses to concur

TO ENROLLMENT (as act)

HOUSE and SENATE adopt conference report in its entirety, pass bill

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
HOUSE member majority of each must agree to report

CHAMBER "THIRD READING"
bill debated, roll call vote on passage, if passed

CHAMBER "SECOND READING"
Special Order read second time, may be amended

CALENDAR
The Rules & Calendar Council may place bill on Special Order Calendar for Chamber consideration

Bill placed on House Calendar

BECOMES EFFECTIVE
on 60th day after adjournment sine die, or, on specified date, or, upon Governor's signature



TO GOVERNOR

signs act

becomes law without signature

vetoes

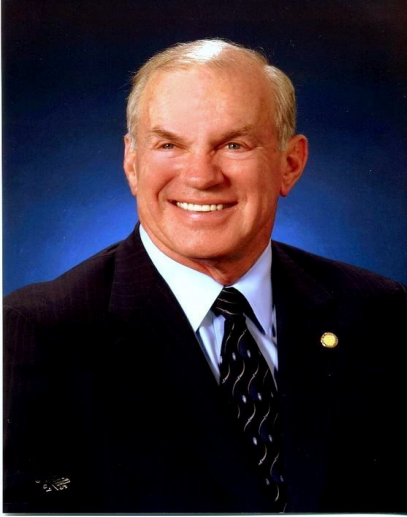
TO SECRETARY OF STATE

Two-thirds vote in each house overrides veto

This simplified chart shows the route a bill takes through the Florida Legislature. Bills may originate in either House. This bill originated in the House of Representatives.

LEGISLATOR'S CORNER

I would like to welcome Rep. Alan Hays to this month's "Legislative Corner". Rep. Hays has district 25 which covers parts of Lake, Seminole, and Volusia Counties. He is a graduate of the UF Dental College. He is currently the chairman of the Government Operations Appropriations Committee and is an instrument rated private pilot. I asked him the following questions.



LV - What happens after someone calls your office, for example I call your aide and say that "I am from Lake County Chapter of ABATE and I would like you to support HB 123 for ABC reasons." How do you keep track of calls, e-mails, and letters? And how do you use that information.

AH - My district staff keeps a record of the calls and other contacts of various types. When I'm in Tallahassee, my secretary forwards contact information from the district office to my aide who informs me of the issue. I then consider all the input from citizens, other members of the legislature, and staff and make my decisions on what I trust is the best public policy.

I answer almost all my email myself. I feel that if a constituent sends me a personal email, they should get a personal reply.

The only exceptions are when the email comes from out of my district or if it is another form email that is being sent by massive numbers of people from all over the state. The out of district form emails usually just get deleted. I rarely answer form emails with anything other than a form reply. If it is a form email, the constituent gets a form reply but the non-constituent gets deleted.

LV - Your district includes a few of our ABATE Chapters. How can they best reach out to you when they have questions or concerns about legislation? Also, how can a NON-constituent best contact you asking for your support when a Bill is in one of your committees?

AH - The best methods to reach me are phone calls or emails. Usually brevity is preferred but if details need to be conveyed, length can be acceptable. Some days we literally get 400 - 600 emails in one single day! We need brevity!! The non-constituent may also reach me via email, subject to the guidelines in number 1 above.

LV - As a Representative, there is a limited number of Bills that you can sponsor, Is there a limit to how many can you co-sponsor? If a constituent asks you to co-sponsor a Bill, how do you make the decision to co-sponsor or not?

AH - The sponsoring limit is six bills but there is NO LIMIT to the co-sponsoring of bills. If I'm asked to co-sponsor a bill, I read the bill and decide if I think it is a good idea. If yes, I co-sponsor. If not, I don't

I would like to add a note of encouragement for all citizens who wish to be heard on a specific issue, to please make every effort to sit down with their legislator, in the district, BEFORE session begins. Our time is much more relaxed in the district and we have time to actually engage in conversation about the issue. That gives us more time to learn from the citizen. If they wait until we get in session, the appointments are usually 10 or 15 minutes only then the next person is standing at the door.

Believe me; riders don't need policies made by uninformed non-riders! Educate your legislator, PLEASE!!