



# Scribes Legislative Voice



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ABATE OF FLORIDA, INC.



Happy February and welcome to the beginning of busiest time of the year for ABATE of Florida's legislative concerns. We have some House and Senate council and committee meetings this month followed by the official start of the 2010 regular session on March 2nd, which will run until April 30th. The highlight of our legislative efforts is our annual Freedom Rights Rally in Tally April 16 – 19. This event is capped off by our escorted run to the State Capital with the bell ringing ceremony and your chance to meet person to person with your Legislators and their staff. And by the way, do not forget about our Bike Week campground Feb. 26 thru March 7. It will be a great time and "The spot" to be at during Bike Week.

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

**"One secret of success in life is to be ready for your opportunity when it comes."~ Benjamin Disraeli**

I can not tell you if we will be successful this coming legislative session. We do know that our opportunity is fast approaching, but will we be ready? Will enough of us answer the call? Or will we just sit on our hands and do nothing, yet be the first to complain when we fail? It is almost like the first game of the season, we have spent the past nine months preparing for the opening kick-off. We have been preaching about getting acquainted with the legislators in our Chapters areas. We have talked about different ways to quickly and easily contact your legislator's offices and how important the office staff is to our success. Now is the time to put into action what we have been taught the past nine months. This is when we earn the title of "Legislative Warrior" which so many of us have on our t-shirts. The Freedom Rights Rally is our big push for our legislative interest. It is the only time we will have that many bikers on the Capital grounds at one time. I will unveil our game plan here and in the weeks leading up to the Rally; we need to prepare our Chapters for the opportunity that awaits us. The first part of our game plan is to persuade your Chapter members to attend the Rally and make the ride on Monday to the Capital. I do not know about you, but that final curve when you first get to see the Capital is

breath taking when you are just one bike in an over a mile-long line of motorcycles. And lets us not forget the emotion of the bell ringing for our dearly departed. Secondly, you need to call a few weeks ahead of the Rally and make appointments with the Legislators from your Chapters' area. Tell them that there will be people from their district attending the Rally and that you would like to stop by for a few minutes and greet them. If the Legislator is not going to be there go and meet their aides and talk to them. Lastly, we will need something to leave with them. I will be sending out to you with suggestions about what to give them in a few weeks, but here is a glimpse as to what will be needed. You will need to prepare a letter that needs to be brief and individualized to the legislator, use bullet points to highlight what Bills we are interested in and a quick reason why we are for or against each Bill. I would also suggest a very brief overview of your Chapter and an invitation to come and speak to you once session is over. I would furthermore recommend that you have as many members as possible sign the page to demonstrate that this is personal and not just a photocopied form letter. There is only one reason why we will not be ready for our opportunity to succeed and that my friend is apathy!

## *Stiffer Penalties Bill*

At the time of this writing, our "Stiffer penalties" Bill is still in Bill Drafting Services which reviews the language of the Bill and basically gets it ready to be numbered and filed. As far as the language goes, it will be the same as last year's Bill's initial language. Both Doc and the Bills sponsors feel that it was well written last year and all agreed that the language and intent of the Bill is still as viable today as it was last year. As soon as we get a Bill number I will get the word out to each Chapter and post it on our website. It will then take each and every Chapter to contact their Legislators office and tell them that your Chapter has "X" number of members who are registered voters that are very much in favor of this Bill. ABATE of Florida, Inc. has 32 Chapters that cover almost every part of the State, so there should not be a single Legislator who has not been informed about the stiffer penalties Bills.

# LEGISLATOR'S CORNER

This month we have Jeanette Nunez who is a candidate for District 112 of the Florida House of Representatives. This district encompasses parts of Collier, Broward, and Miami-Dade Counties. She was recognized as a "National Success Story" for her advocacy efforts with the hospital industry in South Florida. In 2007, Ms. Nunez was named a South Florida Woman of Distinction. Ms. Nunez was very happy to talk to our members about her views on the following question.



Jeanette Nunez  
Candidate for District 112

*LV* - The current law in Florida allows a person aged 21 and over and with the proper medical insurance coverage the freedom to choose whether to wear a helmet or not when on a motorcycle. What is your opinion on this matter.

JN - I'm very familiar with the law having worked in Tallahassee for many years and remembering all the bikers that traveled to Tallahassee on a yearly basis to repeal the helmet law. Generally speaking, I believe government should limit its involvement on issues such as this one. I believe the key for this issue is proper medical coverage, understanding that without proper coverage, we all pay.

*LV* - The rising unemployment rate has affected many families across the State and in District 112. What can you do to help bring jobs back to Florida and your District?

JN - The rising unemployment rate has indeed affected families throughout the State and District 112. If elected, I would like to work with my colleagues to bring jobs to the district, but in particular high wage, high-tech jobs that spur both individual and community prosperity. We have a responsibility to provide potential employers with a good solid education system (from elementary to graduate and post-graduate), access to quality health care and an environment that is safe. In addition, we need to ensure that we do not add to the burden of hard working families, in particular as it relates to property taxes.

*LV* - Where do you stand on State's Rights and the 10th Amendment? Is it a valid concern or just much ado about nothing?

JN - The 10th amendment expressly reserved to the States the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution. Unfunded mandates and federal laws and regulations place an undue burden on states on a number of levels. In my opinion, it is a valid concern, particularly in the face of health reform and other policies that will have tremendous impact on Florida.