



SCRIBES LEGISLATIVE VOICE



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ABATE OF FLORIDA, INC.

Ladies and Gentlemen! Start your engines; the 2010 legislative session has begun. It will start off relatively calm and build to a fast paced and hectic finish on April 30th. Our Freedom Rights Rally at the Capital will take place during the second to last week and will provide us with the perfect time to personally address our concerns with our legislators face to face. In this issue I am going to focus totally on our Freedom Rally and what we need to do to make it successful. We are going to need your help in order to successfully defend our rights as motorcyclist because as the old saying goes, “No man’s Life, Liberty, or Property is safe while the Legislature is in session.”



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

“Freedom Rally in Tallahassee April 19, 2010”

Our trip to the Capital on Monday April 19 is more than just a great ride and touching ceremony. This is the event that separates ABATE of Florida, Inc. from the social motorcycle organizations. The crowning achievement on this day comes after the bell ringing ceremony and the speeches. The essence of ABATE occurs when we enter the Capital to walk the halls and meet our legislators. It is that moment when we, as citizens reach out our hands to our legislators, and truly demonstrate our desire to fight for our freedom and rights as motorcyclist.

My goal for that Monday is to have so many bikers walking the halls of the Capital that sound of our boots will reverberate throughout the Capital for days, serving as a echoing reminder that ABATE of Florida, Inc. was here. We can only achieve that goal by having everyone who attends make the commitment to meet with their legislators. Do not worry about meeting them, most will not bite, but I do recommend keeping your hand on you wallet (just kidding). In all seriousness, I strongly recommend that you call their office and make an appointment. That way you can better schedule your time and when and where you need to be next. The Legislature will be in session so expect to get only 5 minutes of face time with the Legislator, but remember how important their

staff is to us and to them. Treat the staff as if you are talking directly to the Legislator because they are their eyes and ears and they carry a lot of sway with the legislators.

Most of the legislators who represent districts more than an hour away from Tallahassee do not get a great number of constituents visiting them at the Capital. Those from south Florida get even less constituents who visit. Therefore, an in person visit is very impressive and drives home even more your request for support or opposition to a Bill. Most importantly, the visit reinforce the dedication of your Chapter and ABATE of Florida, Inc. to the rights of motorcyclist.

On the next page, I am going to go in detail about our “game plan” and give some suggestions that may be helpful and will take a lot of stress from your day at the Capital. I will help each and every one of you to be properly prepared and hopefully pump up your enthusiasm and decrease you worry about walking the hall of the Capital. But first let me answer the most common comment I hear from ABATE members. In one form or another it goes like this, “I am not a very good speaker and I would not know what to say.” The next page will answer the second part about what to say, but as far as not being a good speaker, here is a secret – be polite and speak from your heart.

Most of us can read the writing on the wall; we just assume it’s addressed to someone else.

~ Ivern Ball

Ivern Ball was a poet with a knack for simple commentary on complex issues. I chose this quote because it addresses something that affects every member of ABATE of Florida, Inc. We all joined ABATE because we care about our rights as motorcyclists and we want to help, but for some of us that is where it ends. We all hear the call to take action, the call to contact your legislators, but some of us think that is for some one else to do. Let me make this clear, the call is for everyone who straddles a motorcycle or cares for someone who rides. The writing is addressed to you and we need you to answer the call. Whether you are able to join us at the Freedom Rally in Tallahassee or just help us by calling or e-mailing your legislators, ABATE of Florida, Inc. and every single motorcyclist in the State of Florida needs your help.

Here is our game plan to help make this Freedom Rally productive for everyone involved. It is very important that the Legislative Trustee at each Chapter take charge of this plan even if they can not make it to Tallahassee, they need to have it ready for whoever is attending from their Chapter to take it with them.

During the Month of March:

☘ Start talking to your Chapter now about getting as many people as possible to attend the Freedom Rights Rally on April 19, 2010.

☘ Educate your members about what Bills we are supporting so that they will be familiar and more knowledgeable about our concerns.

☘ Keep an up-to-date record of our watch Bills so that it can be printed off and distributed before you leave for the Freedom Rally.

☘ Prepare a brief one page description of your Chapter that details current membership number, number of registered voters, the basic geographical area it covers and a little bit about you members.

o **EXAMPLE:** Gator Alley Chapter of ABATE of Florida, Inc covers all of Collier County and some of south Lee County. We currently have 524 members, 498 of which are registered voters. Gator Alley Chapter is a true cross section of the community with a membership that ranges from medical professionals to skilled construction workers and from small business owners to retirees. Our members are very active in their community with several that serve on various county advisory boards and

committees. Our members have been described as “Super Voters” because we vote in each and every election. Etc...etc...etc...

o Leave enough space at the bottom to have as many members as possible sign the paper. This will let the legislator know that there are many more concerned people that could not make the trip but are every bit as concerned about their rights.

o Use your Chapter logo so that it will become more recognizable to them.

During April:

☘ If you know that your Chapter will only have a few members at the Rally, contact your neighboring Chapters to see if you can join them at the Capital, this will give you a bigger group when meeting the legislators.

☘ Contact your legislator’s office to see if they will be there on Monday April 19th. Tell them you will be attending ABATE’s Freedom Rights Rally and that you would like to drop by and greet them. If possible make an appointment and remember to KEEP that appointment.

☘ I will be sending out an up-to-date Bills watch list so that you will know how our Bills of interest are doing.

☘ Combine your information packet together and have ready to go one week before the Rally. It should contain the following:

o Cover sheet that states the legislators name, i.e.: Rep. Matt Hudson, District 101.

o Bills watch list and our position on each Bill. Do this in “bullet format”

o Your one page Chapter information and members signatures.

o Combine these in a nice “slide grip” type report cover from Staples or Wal-Mart. They are usually about 30 cents each.

Day of the Rally:

☘ Enjoy the great escorted ride to the Capital and the bell ringing ceremony.

☘ Gather up your Chapter members or join other Chapters and visit with you legislators.

☘ Be on time for any appointments and greet each person positively. Now is not the time to argue with the legislator no matter your personal feelings, today you are representing ABATE of Florida, Inc.

☘ Introduce all your members that are with you. Give a very short description of your Chapter with number of members and voters. Hand the legislator or aide the report and briefly highlight our Bills of interest and where ABATE stands on each Bill. Lastly invite them to come and speak to your Chapter once the session is over and things have slowed down for them.

That’s it; now enjoy the Capital and the nice ride back to the campground or where ever you are going.

