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NOTES OF KEN KIPHART REGARDING ASSEMBLY BILL 171

History of motorcycle education legislation

In 1990, a bill request was drafted, using model legislation developed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, a not-for-profit national organization dedicated to motorcycle rider education. This bill draft included upper limit tuition costs, based on 1990 pricing ranges. During 1990, there were only two providers of rider education - Clark County Community College and Western Nevada Community College. The average tuition charged by these two colleges was \$79 per student.

In the 1991 legislative session, the Nevada Rider Motorcycle Safety Program was established and placed within the Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety's Office of Traffic Safety.

Operations of the Program began in 1993. The purpose of the program is to conduct quality rider training throughout Nevada and educate the other users of the road to the unique aspects of motorcycles and motorcycling. The program works closely with the Department's drivers license division, motorcycle clubs and groups, law enforcement, the media, the community college system, (which primarily conducts the rider training classes) and traffic safety professionals statewide. These groups work cooperatively to reduce the incidence of motorcycle crashes and fatalities. At the end of 1993, 563 students received this training. Since that time, the Program has grown, training over 15,000 new and experienced riders.

Program awards

The Program began operations with only two training ranges, two sponsors, and five instructors. Today, there are four training sponsors, operating at 15 separate locations throughout the state.

The Program has had numerous noteworthy merits during it's operation. In 1998 and in 2001, the Program received national awards from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation as an Outstanding State Program. Both Truckee Meadows Community College and the Community College of Southern Nevada have received national awards from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation as Outstanding Community Sponsors. Two southern Nevada motorcycle dealers, Desert Motorsports and Kawasaki of Las Vegas, have also received national awards from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION

DATE: 3-13-03 ROOM: 3143 EXHIBIT G

SUBMITTED BY: Ken Kiphart

Tuition-related Issues

The Program is enjoying success, but inflation and the economy have caught up to the tuition limits established in 1990. The cost of a gallon of gasoline in 1990 was \$1.08, compared to today's \$1.93. The consumer price index in 1990 was 130.7, compared to the end of 2002 at 179.9.

According to the 2001 Annual Report of the National Association of State Motorcycle Safety Administrators, the average tuition charged nationally was \$118, with a high tuition of \$249 (Massachusetts), and a low of \$0 by Illinois. The national average instructor's compensation for teaching the class is \$334. The average compensation for Nevada's instructors is only \$283.

Training sponsors need the opportunity to collect tuition that exceeds the \$100 cap currently imposed by NRS.

Speaking only about classes offered directly through the state program office, hard costs for conducting one class of twelve students is approximately \$1,100. There are other costs associated with managing each class that are not included, such as postage, copying, and administrative time are not factored into each class. The extra \$100 received by tuition is not fiscally sufficient.

These costs are only about state program classes. Our urban sponsors, the community colleges, have their own individual cost problems, such as registration staffing and software, building rentals, maintenance and upkeep, all impact their ability to conduct business. Most importantly, the sponsors ability to plan for future program expansion is reduced.

We do expect an ever increasing demand for these valuable classes. Expansion of classes involve cash outlay for extra motorcycles, ranges, and instructors. Without an increase in tuition, these things might not happen.

Potential Instructors

On a second and related subject - One of the most valuable assets that the program has is its cadre of instructors. This small pool of men and women are the centerpiece of training. Currently, our program and sponsors have about 53 active instructors available to them. In 2002, the sponsors and the program conducted 221 classes statewide. Each class requires two instructors, for the most part. This means that each instructor would have to teach, on average, nine classes each training year. But being an instructor is not a full time job. Most all of the instructors have full time, jobs - and families. Some instructors are now deployed with the military. Some are only available during certain months. Each training season, or semester, sponsors attempt to assign classes to instructors and routinely find that the availability of the individual instructor might be limited.

To help with the continued demand of certified instructors, the Program conducts new instructor training twice each year. Once in the south, and once in the north. This new instructor training is intensive, costly, and time consuming. Recruiting motorcyclists to instruct is also a recurring problem.

Our best source of candidates for instructor training are the graduates of our courses. They know first hand how valuable the training is. They've seen the passion displayed by their instructors, and they want to be a part of this rewarding experience. They call the program office, wanting to know how they can get involved. These graduates want to give back to the riding community some of what they got, and their enthusiasm is very high. During the telephone interviews, one of the pre-qualifying questions they are asked is how long they've been endorsed as a motorcyclist. Since they normally have just finished their own class, they have only been endorsed for a few months. The NRS requires that an instructor must be licensed for two years. Therefore, they are turned away as not meeting the requirements. I estimate that out of every five inquiries received, two are recent course graduates.

In 2002, attracting candidates for instructors was at it's all-time low. The Program received about 30 inquiries. Out of that 30, only 9 signed up for the instructor training. Not all of these 9 were successful.

I believe that adjusting the requirement of previous licensing requirements to a one year experience will expand the potential pool of instructor candidates.