

NEW (STOPLIGHT) LAW FOR MOTORCYCLISTS IS JUST COMMON SENSE!

Effective July 1, 2006, motorcyclists can proceed through a red light if the signal fails to change to green after one complete cycle. Senate Bill 1367, sponsored by Senator Jorgenson, (R) Hayden Lake and supported by *ABATE of North Idaho, Inc.*, a Motorcyclists Rights Organization, addresses the problem with signalization the has plagued motorcyclists for many years. The *American Motorcyclists Association* has endorsed and supported this legislation as well.

Since motorcycles don't have enough mass to trigger the electromechanical sensors in the pavement at many intersections, the red light does not always change to green. When traffic conditions are light and no other vehicles are available to trip the sensors, the motorcyclists have had little choice except to *run the light!* This new law allows motorcyclists now to do it legally. Our organization, which promotes safety and motorcycle awareness, encourages that motorcyclists do not take advantage of this new law and use it as an excuse to *run the light*. Safety is our main concern and experienced motorcyclists will always *yield right of way* to larger vehicles. We do not have a death wish!

Though technical solutions to this ongoing problem indeed *may be possible* at what cost to the taxpayers will they come? And, how long will it take to implement these solutions statewide? S1367 has no *fiscal impact* to the taxpayers and passed the Senate 28-2 and the House 66-1. Several of our legislators, including Governor Kempthorne, ride motorcycles and were delighted with this common sense legislation.

An Idaho Transportation Department traffic engineer has stated that there are plans to switch the underground sensors to cameras. This video detection equipment is a significant improvement but still is not *100% effective* in detecting motorcycles, as many motorcyclists will confirm. He also stated that if motorcyclists line up in the center of the lane, that detection is very accurate. Now let's look at this from a motorcyclist's perspective. The center of the lane at many intersections is usually where the oil that leaks from automobiles and trucks accumulates. Just look down next time you pull up to a red light. A motorcycle has a very narrow tire contact patch to the road and when you add to that equation a hot roadway surface or a rain slicked condition, the center of the lane is extremely slippery and not where you want to be! Just watch motorcycles in traffic as they respond to the conditions of the road surface and obstacles that might present danger to a two wheeled vehicle that have no effect on larger four wheeled vehicles.

One Senator from North Idaho, who voted against S1367, claims that this bill gives one group of driver's *special privileges* and said that the only drawback at present is *a little time inconvenience and a few block detour*. A motorcycle is a fuel efficient, licensed vehicle which has the *same rights to the road as any other vehicle*, plus the fact that many motorcycles are used as regular transportation when weather conditions permit. Also, motorcycles inflict considerably less wear and tear on our streets and highways than do other forms of transportation. To imply that this group of drivers is receiving special privileges is simply absurd.

For in-depth information on S1367 and our organization, please refer to our website:
www.abateofnorthidaho.org.

Tim Herzog
Legislative Chairman
ABATE of North Idaho, Inc.