

Committee Members and fellow Citizens,

10/10/2014

My name is Eric Stine and I am here on behalf of ABATE of Utah. American Bikers Aiming Towards Education. ABATE represents all Motorcyclists in the nation. I have been involved in Motorcycle Rights for sixteen years and this is the first time I have had the honor of speaking before this committee.

My Father was a prosecuting attorney for 30 years in South Ogden City. As a young child every Wednesday, I attended Judge Lyons Night Court and the Officers of the SOPD were my babysitters. I have personally attended the Weber County Sherriff's Citizens academy under the direction of Captain Wes Goldsberry while Brad Slater was Sherriff. I am also the State Education Coordinator for ABATE of Utah and have closely worked with the Utah Highway Safety Office regarding Motorcycle Awareness. Dave Beech, Mark Panos and Helen Knipe have been very supportive of ABATE's Share the Road Program, which I have managed for over ten years.

Law enforcement Officers and many of the Bikers here today have at least one thing in common. Their mission was or is protecting and serving the Citizens of this great country. I would like the Veterans to raise their hands and want to thank them for their service. Without these folks, none of us would enjoy the freedom of association we currently have.

This Committee is unique among Legislative Committees. Law enforcement looks to you for the tools to do their job and you must give these tools to them without trampling on the Constitutional Rights of people and organizations to assemble peaceably, and without harassment.

We are here today to discuss gang legislation. When Senator Greiner first proposed the Gang Ordinance in Ogden City, ABATEs, political committee had a very serious discussion about the position we should take. We, against the advice of some of the Motorcycle Clubs we represent, chose to remain silent. We did not want to expend our Political Capital arguing a no-win situation. I think we would all agree that the issue of street gangs and drug cartels needs to be dealt with, and Law Enforcement is looking to this Committee for a tool to deal with this on a proactive basis. We understand and respect that.

ABATE underestimated the impact the last Gang Legislation would have on the Motorcycle community. We are not gang members. Even Representative Ray made the comment that the last Legislation could have been applied to the Boy Scouts. As a Taxpayer I have to wonder how much that legal battle cost Utah before we lost.

Shortly after Senator Greiners bill passed, I heard numerous reports of Motorcycle Riders being stopped on minor violations, photographed, questioned, and most likely put in a data base. Imagine being at a family reunion or other legal gathering, and having law enforcement taking your names and pictures in case you did something wrong later.

Many of the Bikers here today have already met with Representative Ray. He was gracious enough to have a private meeting with us that was attended by the majority of the motorcycle clubs in Utah. He is taking our concerns under advisement and has agreed to address our concerns and work with us. As with this Committee the Bikers here today do not agree on all issues. However, I believe ABATEs membership and the clubs we represent agree that our support of any gang legislation this year depends on several things and we urge this Committee to think this through very carefully before passing on any Bills regarding gang legislation.

Here is some of what we expressed to Representative Ray at our meeting.

1. Any gang legislation considered needs strong anti-profiling language such as we provided Representative Ray from the State of Washington.
2. The criteria for being added to a gang list needs to be very stringent. Guilty by association should not be enough.
3. Any Gang list needs to be public record.
4. Criteria needs to be established to remove an individual from a gang list if they find they are on one.
5. Legal fees should not be charged to individuals seeking removal from any gang list.

We understand that Law Enforcement is a hard thankless job and that these Officers can use all the help they can get to protect and serve the Citizens. It is your job as a committee to carefully weigh the ramifications to the citizenry, of any bill ultimately presented on law enforcements behalf. In general, the motorcyclists, including the motorcycle clubs in the State of Utah, feel we have a good rapport with law enforcement and certainly want to keep it that way. Again, the Bikers here today are not gang members, they are fellow citizens.

We look forward to working with Representative Ray, the Law Enforcement community and this Committee if you so choose, to make our community safer. However, it is still the belief of many of us here today that by enforcing laws that are already on the books against individuals rather than groups. The ultimate goal of public safety can still be accomplished.

On behalf of ABATE of Utah, thank you for listening to our concerns. Are there any questions. If you have any later feel free to contact us.