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Testimony on HB 2459: Motorcycle Operator Training

Senate Transportation Committee

February 16, 2012

Rep. Tom Sloan

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you as a proponent of HB 2459 which would require the State of Kansas to recognize the training of motorcycle operators provided to persons in the military by the Department of Defense (DoD).

This issue was brought to the attention of Rep. John Grange and me by the Dept. of Defense through the National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL) Military & Veterans Affairs Task Force. Rep. Grange is Co-Chairperson and I am a member of that Task Force. The DoD invests lots of money annually in training young men and women as soldiers, airmen, Marines, and seamen; many of these young people enjoy speed and thrills. The DoD noted an alarming increase in the number of young persons being injured or killed while operating motorcycles and instituted a rigorous operator safety program that must be completed prior to the military person being permitted to operate a motorcycle on the base.

Currently, the State of Kansas does not recognize such training as being at least the equivalent training required of civilians to obtain a motorcycle operator's license. HB 2459 states that persons who complete motorcycle safety training in accordance with DoD instructions are not required to complete further training or testing otherwise required by existing state law. Unstated is the DoD's perception that requiring motorcyclists in the military to take the training a second time constitutes an unnecessary burden. The bill does NOT prohibit the Division of Vehicles from charging appropriate licensing fees.

On behalf of the Dept. of Defense and the NCSL Military & Veterans Affairs Task Force, thank you for your consideration. I will respond to questions at the appropriate time.