

MRF Event Report
41st MRF Meeting of the Minds
Shreveport, Louisiana
Presented by Nick Gourley and Kim Adair

WA Attendees: Nick Gourley, Diana Picone, Huck Huckeby, Jo & Mark Breneman and Kim Adair

Thank you for the opportunity to report back from this year's Motorcycle Riders Foundation's "Meeting of the Minds" in Shreveport Louisiana.

Often we hear about how people go to this event, but don't get a full and detailed reporting of what happened. This is an incredible Freedom Fighter conference that people come away from, empowered, inspired, and as better leaders.

While space is limited, I'll try to do it some justice here.

Meeting of the Minds is an incredible opportunity to learn, network, and share best practices with motorcycle rights advocates from across the nation. This year's conference drew over 400 attendees, representing 40 states. The energy, collaboration, and dedication to preserving riders' rights was truly inspiring and contagious.

Engagement and the Next Generation

One of the strongest themes throughout the weekend was engagement— particularly with younger riders

Across the country, organizations like ours are recognizing the need to bridge the gap between long-time members and the next generation of riders and advocates.

Here's the message:

- * Get the kids involved early!
- * Take them on our rides!
- * Bring them to the Capitol!
- * Let them experience advocacy in action!

It starts at home and within our own chapters. The goal is to build genuine, lasting interest and responsibility among new and younger riders before apathy has a chance to take hold.

The MRF has an incredible recognition award called the Young Activists AWARD. Stay tuned to our Newsletter for detailed information for the criteria on this great recognition of young leaders.

Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) Update

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) recently requested that all trainers sign updated waivers during a nationwide Zoom presentation.

Normally, these sessions draw about 150 participants, but this time, over 900 trainers logged on — a clear indicator that major developments may be underway within MSF training programs.

We'll continue to monitor this evolving situation and report back with updates as they become available.

Meet the States – National Highlights

During the “Meet the States” session, representatives from across the country shared legislative updates, success stories, and safety initiatives.

It was encouraging to see that the majority of motorcycle rights organizations represented were ABATE chapters, reinforcing the reach and respect our movement holds nationwide. Here are a few of the more notable updates:

Illinois

Motorcycle safety courses are funded through motorcycle registration fees.

Students pay a refundable \$20 course fee, but most choose to donate it back to support future riders.

Their Cycle Rider Safety Training Program, established in 1976, stands as a model for community-supported training and sustainability.

Kansas

Working to adopt Maine’s “Right to Repair” language into state law. Continuing efforts to clarify the legal definition of a motorcycle.

Bentley’s Law has successfully passed the House.

Minnesota (St. Croix Region)

Lane-splitting laws were modified to prohibit the practice in school zones and roundabouts.

This example shows that while some states are expanding freedoms, others are fine-tuning definitions and limits for safety or liability reasons.

Legislative Focus: Bentley’s Law

“Bentley’s Law” originated in Missouri and, though it did not pass there, it has since been enacted in Texas, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Maine.

The law requires “financial restitution or child support payments” from DUI offenders who kill a parent. It’s a powerful piece of legislation — aimed at addressing not only justice but also the long-term well being of families affected by impaired driving.

This initiative continues to gain traction and could eventually see federal attention or replication in additional states.

Texas Legislative Updates

Texas remains one of the more active legislative battlegrounds for riders’ rights and freedoms.

*1. HB 2440 – The Database Bill:

This bill allows “law enforcement to place riders in a database.” The Texas ABATE chapters, together with the Texas Council of Clubs, have formed a unified front in opposition to this tracking practice.

*2. Stacked Insurance Policies:

Another major issue in Texas concerns “stacked insurance” — a policy structure that lets riders combine coverage across multiple vehicles or policies for higher protection against uninsured motorists.

Here's a quick summary of how it works and why it matters:

Washington law requires insurance companies to offer stacked coverage, though riders can decline it in writing.

Some states prohibit stacking, others limit it, and some require an explicit opt-in.

Courts generally side with policyholders when insurers try to deny claims under unclear stacking terms.

Some states even have laws preventing insurers from using anti-stacking clauses altogether.

It's a rider protection issue that could resurface here in Washington in the future, so it's worth keeping on our radar.

Missouri Update

Missouri Senate Bill 711 has made progress to the Transportation Committee.

This bill would allow multi-color auxiliary lighting on motorcycles — expanding beyond the current restrictions to just amber and white.

While a small change on the surface, it represents a broader push toward improving visibility and increasing rider safety through customization.

Closing Summary

In closing, this year's MRF event served as a clear reminder that:

Engagement and education are our foundation.

Legislative awareness and unity remain our strength.

and passing the torch to the next generation of riders is essential to our survival and success.

We returned home with new information, stronger connections, and renewed purpose — ready to continue advocating for riders' rights and freedoms here in Washington State.

By sending ABATE of Washington leadership to the Meeting of the Minds they become better trained, better informed, inspired to lead and full of relevant information regarding our continued fight for Freedom of the Road.

If you get an opportunity to join State Motorcycle Rights Organizations (SMRO), in addition to our own great organization here in Washington, please consider it.

We learn more when we network and seek greater awareness!

Ride Free!

Nick Gourley & Kim Adair

ABATE of Washington State

MOTM Attendees