

Press Release



Contact:
JD Long, PR/Communications Trustee
Vintage Chapter, ABATE of Florida, Inc.
904-669-0361
jdmotorcycleshow@aol.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE:**

St. Augustine, FL Says “No” to Motorcycles’ Safe Parking

St. Augustine, FL 12/13/09 — Back in 2005 the City of St. Augustine Florida built a parking garage downtown to ease their parking woes. The garage was completed, signs were put up, and when it was all done, motorcyclists were banned from the garage. The city probably should have checked with their attorneys to make sure they weren’t breaking Florida State Statute (F.S.S) 316.208 (1), which they were in violation of then and still are.

F.S.S. 316.208 (1) states that “Any person operating a motorcycle or moped shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of any other vehicle under this chapter...” The City of St. Augustine’s “NO MOTORCYCLES” sign outside their Visitor Information Center Public Parking Garage doesn’t seem to acknowledge this Florida law. Additionally, the vast majority of motorcyclists parking there would be Florida residents, many from the local towns the garage is near. They are all taxpayers. The garage was constructed with taxpayer funds.

St. Augustine City Council says that the manufacturer of the access gates in the garage won’t guarantee that the magnetic strip triggering the gate will work properly for vehicles weighing less than a car. Further, the gate manufacturer is concerned that a gate may come down on top of a rider as they are accessing the garage.

Solutions have been offered. Some have suggested the city spend upwards of \$12,000 to create a special motorcycle entrance and cut concrete barriers, creating a new motorcycle parking area. Others have suggested a \$6,000 option of a special area created with special motorcycle parking meters. However, the most logical option appears to be rising to the surface: cut the access gates so that bikes can ride in without requiring the gates to rise and establish a set price for bikes to park there, the same price regardless of how long they are parked.

After presenting this while speaking out at a recent City Commissioners’ Meeting, ABATE of Florida’s Vintage Chapter’s Public Relations Trustee, JD Long, learned that these new parking spaces could be created from sections not being currently used since cars won’t fit. This would create new revenue to the city as this space is not generating money currently. The cost of this? A vote at the City Commissioners Meeting and approximately \$500, which would most likely be recouped in a few months.

-more-

(page 2 of 2)

St. Augustine Says “No” to Motorcycles

That vote may come at the next City Commissioners Meeting, January 11, 2010. Commissioners Errol Jones and Nancy Sikes-Kline have stated that they like the cutting of the gates idea. Leanna Freeman & Don Crichlow, the remaining two Commissioners and Mayor Joseph L. Boles are the remaining votes, but have not confirmed their stance on this issue. The City Manager Bill Harris also favors granting motorcyclist access by cutting the gates, but he does not have a binding vote.

ABATE of Florida's Vintage Chapter is asking all motorcyclist to show their outrage against this ban and defend their rights as motorcyclists and as tax payers by coming to the next St. Augustine City Commissioners Meeting, Monday, JANUARY 11, 2009, 5 PM, at the Lightner Museum, located at 75 King Street, St. Augustine, FL.

With almost 8,000 members, ABATE of Florida, Inc. is Florida's largest Motorcyclists' Rights Organization, and the fourth largest nationwide. Our missions include educating the public about motorcycle awareness and continuing to fight in Tallahassee for the rights of every motorcyclist and the public in general. To aid in these ends, we have a lobbyist on staff and have founded the Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Program, both with the intentions to help make the roads safer for everyone.

###