



Motorcycle Industry Council
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U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary to Hold Distracted Driving Summit

Motorcycle Industry Council to Participate

Washington, D.C., Sept. 23, 2009 - U.S. Transportation Secretary, Ray LaHood has announced that a summit addressing distracted driving will be held in Washington D.C. Sept. 30th-Oct. 1st. According to a Department of Transportation (DOT) press release, "The Distracted Driving Summit will bring together respected leaders from around the country for interactive sessions on the extent and impact of the problem, current research, regulations, best practices and other key topics. The two day Summit will feature five panels - on data, research, technology, policy, and outreach - with a range of experts discussing each topic." Representatives from the Motorcycle Industry Council (MIC) will attend and participate in interactive sessions at the summit.

According to a 2006 research report released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI), nearly 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes involved some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the event. Primary causes of driver inattention are distracting activities, such as cell phone use, and drowsiness.

"MIC is encouraged to see attention is being given to distracted driving. Motorcyclists are particularly vulnerable to crashes involving a distracted driver as motorcycles are smaller than other vehicles and more likely to be obscured or overlooked," said MIC's Senior Vice President, Government Relations, Kathy Van Kleeck.

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Van Kleeck continued, “MIC understands that distracted driving impacts all road users and is a serious issue for everyone; however, we hope the unique issues faced by motorcyclists will be addressed at the summit and considered in any recommendations for moving forward. We are also pleased that the MIC-initiated Motorcycle Safety Caucus will have the opportunity to weigh in on any Congressional recommendations.”

Duane Taylor, MIC’s Director, Federal Affairs notes, “There are an estimated 9 million motorcycles on America’s highways, a significant number, but still a small fraction of all road users. This means that many drivers often do not anticipate motorcycles on the roadway and this issue can only be amplified when a driver is on the phone, texting or otherwise distracted.” He continued, “Motorcyclists can do their part to avoid crashes by getting trained and licensed and preparing for a crash by choosing to wear the full compliment of personal protective gear, but ultimately all drivers need to decide to drive without distraction.”

The summit will be broadcast live via webcast for anyone who wishes to follow the proceedings. More information about the summit, an agenda, and information about the webcast, can be accessed by visiting http://www.rita.dot.gov/distracted_driving_summit/.

The Motorcycle Industry Council exists to preserve, protect and promote motorcycling through government relations, communications and media relations, statistics and research, aftermarket programs, development of data communications standards, and activities surrounding technical and regulatory issues.

It is a not-for-profit, national trade association representing manufacturers and distributors of motorcycles, scooters, motorcycle/ATV/ROV parts and accessories, and members of allied trades such as publishing companies, advertising agencies, insurance firms and consultants.

The MIC is headquartered in Irvine, Calif., with a government relations office adjacent to Washington, D.C. First called the MIC in 1970, the organization has been in operation since 1914.

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