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Motorcycle Industry Rallies in Washington Against Youth Model Lead Ban
Despite Opposition, CPSC Staff Recommends Denial of Waiver for ATVs and Dirt Bikes

IRVINE, Calif., April 2, 2009 – Executives from the Motorcycle Industry Council and the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America, along with dealers from West Virginia and Maryland, participated in The CPSIA Rally yesterday in Washington, D.C., to press for changes to the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act. The powersports industry representatives also urged support for two new bills – S. 608 and H.R. 1587 – that would overturn the ban that resulted from the CPSIA, aka The Lead Ban, which halted sales of off-highway motorcycles and ATVs designed for kids 12 and under, on Feb. 10.

More than 200 people gathered at the CPSIA Rally, representing impacted businesses from across America, plus scientists who testified that there is no health risk to kids, manufacturers, members of Congress, AMA representatives including six-year-old motocross racer Chase Yenser and his family, ATV/motorcycle dealers Steve Burnside from DSD Kawasaki in West Virginia and Richard Riley from Fredericktown Yamaha in Maryland.

“We were very encouraged after hearing the first five Congressional speakers,” said MIC President Tim Buche. “Senator Jim DeMint, Senator Bob Bennett, Representatives Michael Burgess, Joe Barton and Denny Rehberg all support excluding ATVs and motorcycles from the law.”

However, despite the public and Congressional support, the staff of the Consumer Product Safety Commission announced that they recommend denying a request to exempt all-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes because the vehicles can have higher-than-allowed levels of lead in the brake and clutch levers, the valve stems on tires, the battery and other parts.

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LEAD BAN RALLY – Page 2

The CPSC staff strongly suggested that they would have recommended relief under a risk-based standard. “The staff agrees that exposure to lead from motorized recreational vehicles would likely be relatively low...,” stated the staff recommendation. At the same time, CPSC staff acknowledged: “A bigger safety concern than lead exposure is that the elimination of youth ATV sales will most likely increase the number of adult ATVs purchased to be used by younger children; therefore increasing the risk of injury and death.”

“As a result of the CPSC staff recommendation, we must intensify all efforts to get Congressional support for a regulatory or legislative fix,” Buche said. “One way is to strongly advocate two new bills that have been introduced, S. 608 and H.R. 1587.”

Introduced by U.S. Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., on March 17, S.608 would amend the CPSIA to exclude secondary sales, repair services and certain vehicles, including youth ATVs and motorcycles, from the ban on lead in children’s products.

U.S. Reps. Denny Rehberg, R-Mont., Michael Burgess, R-Texas, Earl Pomeroy, D-N.D., and Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, introduced H.R. 1587 on March 18 in the U.S. House of Representatives to amend the lead prohibition provisions of the CPSIA to provide an exemption for certain off-highway vehicles, along with other purposes.

“We’re very pleased to see this Congressional support to end the ban,” Buche said. “We’re working with the sponsors to ensure these bills would provide immediate and critical relief to the powersports industry.”

The MIC is urging its members, dealers, and enthusiasts to act and show their support for S. 608 and H.R. 1587 by contacting their members of Congress and appropriate committee members via www.StopTheBanNow.com.

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LEAD BAN RALLY – Page 3

MIC statements, news releases, video testimonials, news articles, and additional information regarding the CPSIA are also available at www.StopTheBanNow.com.

Immediate updates are available via Twitter by following paulvitano.

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.

Since 1983, the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America[®] has promoted the safe and responsible use of All-Terrain Vehicles through rider training programs, public awareness campaigns, and state legislation. The SVIA also serves as a resource for ATV research, statistics, and vehicle standards. The SVIA, based in Irvine, Calif., is a not-for-profit trade association sponsored by Arctic Cat, BRP, Honda, Kawasaki, KTM, KYMCO, Polaris, Suzuki, Tomberlin, Tomoto and Yamaha. For membership information, call (949) 727-3727. For safety information or to enroll in the ATV *RiderCourse*SM nearest you, visit www.atvsafety.org and click on “Online Enrollment” or call (800) 887-2887.

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