

The Virginia Coalition of Motorcyclists and Tom McGrath 's Motorcycle Law group would like to invite all interested motorcyclists to attend this year's Motorcycle Lobby Day. This year it will be held on Monday January 16, 2012. This is a holiday, so many people are off. That morning, Virginia Coalition of Motorcyclists lobbyists, as well as members of other state motorcycle rights organizations, independent motorcyclists and any other interested people will go to the Virginia General Assembly to discuss upcoming legislation that affects motorcyclists in Virginia with their Delegates and Senators.

On Sunday January 15, from 12:00 p.m. until we get through, Virginia Coalition of Motorcyclists lobbyists will lead an informational meeting at the Holiday Inn Airport at 445 International Center Dr. , Sandston , VA 23150 to discuss this year's legislation affecting motorcyclists. We will also discuss how to talk to your legislators about these issues in case you have never done that. Later that evening, attendees will enjoy a free homemade BBQ dinner made by Stewart Newton and provided by several Virginia motorcycle rights organizations including ABATE of Virginia and the Virginia Bikers Association.

On Monday the 16th, we leave the Holiday Inn at 8:00 a.m. sharp for our annual trip to the Capitol. After lobbying our legislators, we will attend the opening of the House of Delegates daily session and be recognized from the floor. Afterwards, Tom McGrath 's Motorcycle Law Group takes everyone to Penny Lane Pub for lunch as a thank you for coming to support Virginia Motorcyclists.

This year we are expecting numerous bills of interest to Virginia motorcyclists. We already know that we will have a bill to prohibit Motorcycle Only Checkpoints in Virginia . Delegate Todd Gilbert has agreed to be the patron for that bill and has sent our draft to Legislative Services for finalization. It was unanimously agreed upon at this year's legislative round table that this bill was our number one priority this year. If passed, it will put an end to the discriminatory practice of targeting motorcyclists with checkpoints which have to date yielded very little for those that have conducted them.

We are also still looking at a bill to abolish Virginia 's prohibition against two motorcycles riding abreast of each other. As many of you know it is considered reckless driving for two motorcyclists to ride next to each other in Virginia . In 48 other states, it is completely legal. Despite the fact that there is no data to show that two motorcyclists riding abreast are more likely to be in an accident, and further given the fact that Virginia recently passed legislation to allow on-duty law enforcement officers to do so, it still remains a jail-able offense for the general motorcycling community in Virginia . We had been unable to seriously speak with potential patrons until the elections concluded. Jim Cannon and I have an appointment to meet with a member of the House of Delegates who has expressed interest in carrying this bill for us. I will keep you informed as talks progress.

As always, there will be numerous bills submitted at the last minute which will negatively affect motorcycling. As these bills are filed, we will be able to identify them and discuss them at lobby day so that we can convince the legislators why they are bad bills. Those who have participated in Lobby Day in the past remember the bill that we killed that would have required proof of insurance before one person could sell another person a motorcycle, even if the person buying

the motorcycle had no intention of putting the bike on the road. We killed that one with the help of all of those who participated in Lobby Day. Last year we defeated a bill that would have prohibited children under eight from riding on a motorcycle as a passenger.

I encourage everyone who can to join us. It is a lot of fun, it is educational, and most importantly it shows the legislators that motorcyclists are a significant and active section of the electorate.

For more information you can call VCOM at (800) 437-9434. For Room Reservations call (804) 236-1111 and ask for the VCOM rate.