

**Safety Tips # 44**  
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**The Politics of Safety**

How to stay safer on the roads: get involved in politics. Huh? Believe it or not, it's true! Let me explain.

I'm sure everyone would agree that riding on the roads is safer with more riders graduating rider safety courses, with more riders properly licensed, and with more car drivers aware of motorcycle riders. But Colorado may be poised to take a giant step in the wrong direction, and become the first state in the Nation to do away with its rider safety Program (M.O.S.T.)!

The M.O.S.T. Program, a division of CDOT, has been in existence since 1990. This program is funded totally by motorcyclists – and WE ASKED TO PAY CERTAIN FEES IN ORDER TO FUND IT AND TO HAVE THIS PROGRAM IN PLACE. We got our wish. The Program has been providing tuition reimbursements to training companies so that safety courses can be provided at a lower cost to the student. And, in general, it works.

The Program also provides certain operating expenses to training companies that are willing to take the training courses to locations that would not otherwise be able to support permanent training sites – rural areas where there is not enough population to otherwise warrant a business setting up operations there. These are known as Mobile Programs; there are at least 4 of them currently operating. Again, it's working!

The Department of Motor Vehicles is making it harder and harder for a rider to get a riding skills test, which, of course, is part of the

process of becoming properly licensed. Riders depend on training companies to give them the necessary testing (at the completion of a safety course). And, again, it works!

A Legislative audit was completed, and the Program was found to have problems. But if the M.O.S.T. Program was to come to an end, certain undesirable things would occur, making our roads less safe to ride on:

- 1 – There would be fewer trained riders.
- 2 – There would be fewer licensed riders.
- 3 – There would be no M.O.S.T.-supported motorist awareness programs.

Does this sound like a leap *backwards* to you? It sure does to me. Yet certain of our legislators think that because the Program is imperfect, it should be completely scrapped. We need to keep this Program in place, and make it better than it already is. Keep in touch with your legislators and let them know that the M.O.S.T. Program is vital to rider safety in Colorado. Remind them that it is paid for only by motorcyclists, *not by the general public*. Let them know that if the Program is scrapped no other government agencies would get the funding dollars; the funding would just stop coming in. Watch for any legislation that may be introduced with the start of the next legislative session in January, and opposed it vehemently.

Our roads will be safer for us riders if we make these efforts.