



Motorcycle Riders Foundation

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Editor
Detroit Free Press
600 W Fort
Detroit, MI 48226

To The Editor;

The Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) is contacting you to express profound concern and dismay regarding Brian Dickerson's March 21st column in the Detroit Free Press. The MRF, based in Washington D.C., represents over 200,000 motorcyclists nationwide through our individual members and member organizations.

While the MRF strongly endorses freedom of speech and the press, and is aware that this is an "editorial" column, we also expect a paper of the Detroit Free Press's caliber to print responsible material. This requires knowledge of the subject, and adherence to the rest of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. For Mr. Dickerson to advocate mandatory organ donation, refer to motorcyclists as "the no helmet crowd...prized as a rich source of youthful hearts, livers and kidneys" is an outrage.

Furthermore, to associate the advocates of freedom of choice with Jack Kevorkian, and the tragic case of Mrs. Schiavo in Florida is not editorial comment. It is sensationalist nonsense, void of journalistic ethics.

Over one million motorcycles were sold in the United States last year. Each purchased by an individual who contributes to their community, pays taxes, and reads newspapers. And yes, quite a few motorcyclists also participate in the legislative process. In Michigan these riders have successfully persuaded the State Senate that the government should not be in the business of mandating an individual's attire.

Mr. Dickerson is certainly within his rights to disagree with this legislation. He's also entitled to write about it. If he had offered one paragraph of solid cause for his position, the MRF would not be sending this letter. If Mr. Dickerson writes simply to generate attention, and the cause of self-promotion, then he has been successful.

The Detroit Free Press's toleration of such irresponsibility is troubling indeed.

The MRF suggests that if Mr. Dickerson is truly concerned about the welfare of riders he will promote the tireless effort motorcyclists give to safety and awareness programs.

On the other hand it is so much easier to pen a column about Jack Kevorkian, Mrs. Schiavo, motorcyclists and an issue he knows nothing about.

Sincerely,

Karen Bolin
MRF President

Jeff Hennie
MRF Vice-President Government Relations

MRF Board of Directors