



November 16, 2004

Via email

Ms. Karen Bolin
President, Motorcycle Riders Foundation
2535 Forest Ridge Drive
Auburn, WA 98002

Dear Karen,

Regarding your November 11 alert, although MSF was not present at the meeting in Georgia last week, the feedback we received was very positive, and our position remains unchanged from what was communicated to you on September 28. Of note is the statement, "As a result of our work in Georgia, the GMSP has formed a working group comprised of those within the rider education and training community to address mutual concerns and we are confident that the GMSP will continue as an even stronger state program."

Here is the portion of the September 28 letter that addresses the situation in Georgia:

It is absolutely, categorically false that MSF lobbied to eliminate state funding for the Georgia Motorcycle Safety Program – or any other state program. In fact, the MSF has a strong history of helping to protect or increase state funding for rider education programs.

During the last two years MSF has helped Michigan and Utah protect state funding for rider education. Additionally, for many years we have helped Massachusetts and South Carolina secure legislative appropriations for their rider education programs. When the South Carolina appropriation was vetoed in 2003, MSF intended to work to override the veto, but was told by program principals that an override was unnecessary. Therefore, without support from those involved with the program, MSF did not pursue a veto override to restore the appropriation.

In 2002, in response to a growing number of complaints from potential students about the unavailability of rider education courses in Georgia, from RiderCoaches regarding their inability to teach courses, as well as MSF member companies' increasing frustration with the inability to expand training opportunities for Georgia consumers, MSF began working with government officials in Georgia to address capacity concerns.

Unfortunately, efforts to increase training capacity in Georgia were seriously impeded because independent programs were not allowed to operate effectively, if at all, in Georgia.

Repeated discussions over a long period of time with the state coordinator in an attempt to address these concerns did not result in improvement.

Over the past two years, MSF has met several times with Georgia officials to discuss these capacity issues. During one of our meetings, a state legislator discussed the fact that Governor Perdue was exploring the privatization of a number of state government services. The governor had asked him to explore the possibility and options for privatization of the motorcycle rider education program.

In response to his request, we provided information on the framework for privatization as it is utilized in several other states. At no time did we promote, advocate for, or pursue complete privatization of rider education in Georgia or the elimination of state funding. In fact, it was made clear at all our meetings that our desire was to work with the existing state coordinator, within the framework of the existing Georgia State Motorcycle Program to increase the ability for more riders and prospective riders to participate in the GMSP.

As a result of our work in Georgia, the GMSP has formed a working group comprised of those within the rider education and training community to address mutual concerns and we are confident that the GMSP will continue as an even stronger state program.

Karen, we would appreciate it if you make this information available to the MRF Board and to your members via the MRF website.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Van der Leun
Director, Communications
Motorcycle Safety Foundation