

C.M.R.A.

**Connecticut Motorcycle Riders Association
Legislative Committee
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The Connecticut Motorcycle Riders Association would like to sincerely thank Senator Rob Kane for bringing to the attention of the Veteran's Committee Senate Bill No. 303. We would like to thank the Veteran's Committee Co-Chairs; Senator Leone and Representative Hennessy, and all of the Veteran's Committee Members for their consideration for the struggles of the Armed Forces obtaining their 'M' motorcycle endorsements.

Please understand that this struggle has been ongoing since legislation was enacted in January of 2011. As a result of that enactment, any applicants that desire to obtain a motorcycle endorsement are required to take a Connecticut approved Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) course. It is understood that the course requirement was an effort to improve motorcycle safety and road use. However, like many well intentioned efforts, it had the unintended consequence of creating an unnecessary burden on our men and women in uniform.

Our Soldiers have limited time on leave. The CT MSF Basic Rider Course (BRC) and the visit to the DMV to get an endorsement require an approximate five days from start to finish. A soldier on leave is then required to take precious time away from family and friends to follow through to get an 'M' endorsement on their licenses.

These young men and women are working for a small salary. The Department of Defense (DOD) often offers free BRCs from the MSF on most military bases. The BRC offered by the DOD is often more stringent than the course offered by any State MSF BRC.

The CMRA would like to see this bill pass. According to an MSF report from 2011, Connecticut is only one of six states in the nation that requires the MSF BRC for a motorcycle endorsement for all riders.

In order for the SB 303 to pass, DMV Commissioner Melody Curry, would have to consider an option for DOD MSF BRC completion recognition. Since a soldier may not be able to return to Connecticut immediately after course completion, the CT DMV may consider a sticker (like the change of address stickers) to adhere to their licenses until

they can return to the state and have an updated one by the CT DMV. Since the DOD is a Federal Agency, it would be extremely complicated to “forge” class completion certificates.

The eye exam required for an ‘M’ endorsement should be waived in the final consideration of this bill for a few reasons:

1. Many soldiers are of a very young age.
2. An eye exam is part of any enlisted personnel’s initial physical to enter the Armed Forces.
3. Any soldier that has to wear corrective eyewear will have that information recorded in their personnel files.
4. An eye exam does not seem to be a part of the testing procedure for operating a car. The current CT “Driver’s Manual” suggests that a new driver get their eyes checked and inform the licensing department if they wear corrective eye wear. The eye exam is only required in the DMV office for Motorcyclists. Commercial Operators have an eye exam done with their DOT physicals.

In conclusion, the recognition of the DOD MSF BRC course should be accepted by the DMV for members of the Armed Forces. It is hoped by the CMRA that the DMV Commissioner may be able to assist the Veteran’s Committee to capably follow through with the passage of SB 303. The acknowledgement of this bill for our soldiers will hopefully encourage these young men and women to consider returning to Connecticut to live and prosper after they discharge from military service.

Other information:

Obtained from the Florida DMV website (thanks to ABATE of Florida)-

Military Applicants

If you're stationed outside of Florida and need a motorcycle endorsement for your FL driver license, you'll need to:

- Complete a military-sponsored or MSF-approved motorcycle safety course.
- Send the completion card from the course, along with a \$32 check or money order (\$25 for license, \$7 for endorsement) and a request for a duplicate license with a motorcycle endorsement, to the Division of Driver Licenses at: Bureau of Records, P.O. Box 5775, Tallahassee, FL 32314-5775. Include your full name, out-of-state mailing address, driver license number, and date of birth in your request. You may also need to provide identification documents again, so be prepared.