

I'm going to ask now for your help.

I know this is December but we're already preparing for some of the legislative initiatives that will be introduced in the 2022 Session of the General Assembly. Sadly when the IIAV Legislative Committee meets this week, we'll likely even be discussing some legislation WE might want to initiate in 2023.

That said, and while we're looking at a wide range of issues for the coming year, I'd appreciate it if you will commit now to communicating with your elected representatives – both your Delegate and State Senator – to give them your opinion on legislation they will be considering.

I recall years ago, IIAV member, former State Senator and Lt. Governor Bill Bolling, would tell us that if he received 10 emails/calls or communications on a particular topic, his staff was supposed to bring the issue to his attention. That seemed like a very low threshold. The point being that constituents rarely contacted their state representatives.

These days of course, it is very easy to communicate with your elected representative by email at the very least. A phone call from constituents is also VERY effective.

I also recall years ago, that we didn't like a bill that we called the "lazy plaintiff attorney's bill" and referred to it in all our membership communications. As I was waiting to speak with a legislator on The Hill, I overheard a legislative assistant answering the phone and saying, "You want to speak to the delegate about the "lazy plaintiff attorney bill"? Now THAT was effective political communications.

You, the IIAV member, are the back up to our efforts to communicate with legislators. If we tell them that a bill is bad but they don't hear from anyone it sort of discounts our efforts to communicate effectively. This year, it's possible that two measures will be introduced that will have huge public interest and concern. We know the proponents of the measure will be motivated to encourage their legislators to support the measure. So if the legislators DON'T hear from their constituents... they might be inclined to support the proposal... and I'm speaking of course, of allowing motorcycles to lane split. I have yet to speak with anyone who supports such a measure. Yet, there are those who are well versed to explain that this is a great idea. Again, if the legislators don't hear from us... what do you expect them to do?

I tell people that politics and lobbying is a full contact sport. We must reach out and communicate with our legislators. If they don't hear from us, then you can't expect them to act as you would like. They are after all "elected representatives."

So, as you seek to think of a New Year's Resolution for 2022... pledge to communicate with your legislators when it's needed.

On behalf of the IIAV staff, we wish you the very best of Holiday Seasons and thank you for the opportunity to represent your professional interests in all facets – information resources, education and professional development, and advocacy.

Robert N. Bradshaw, Jr., MAM

IIAV President & CEO