

DRIVING FORCE

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GOLDEN STATE GREAT

California Assembly Member Tim Grayson
Awarded Legislator of the Year

Congratulations to California's Tim Grayson, 2019 Legislator of the Year

By Christian Robinson

California Assembly Member Tim Grayson (D-CA) was announced as the winner of the Stephen B. McDonald Legislator of the Year award at the 2019 SEMA Show. Representing the 14th District, Assembly Member Grayson was recognized for his efforts in the California legislature to promote policies and legislation that support the automotive hobby.

Assembly Member Grayson is proudly counted among the hundreds of lawmakers comprising the SEMA-supported State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus and has routinely demonstrated his commitment to enthusiasts. The annual award is presented to a state lawmaker who has gone above and beyond to support the hobby in their home state and was named for SEMA's late Vice President of Government Affairs Stephen B. McDonald, who was the leading advocate behind the founding and growth of the Caucus.

"Since I was a teenager, I've enjoyed the challenge and satisfaction that comes with customizing my cars. I'm a proud owner of classic cars, but I'm even more proud of the opportunity to support this exciting and innovative industry," Assembly Member Grayson said.

Assembly Member Grayson was one of the driving forces behind legislation to immediately restore law enforcement's ability to issue fix-it tickets, providing car owners 30



Assembly Member Tim Grayson (second from right) was recognized for his efforts in the California legislature to promote policies and legislation that support the automotive aftermarket industry. During the 2019 SEMA Show, Assembly Member Grayson accepts his award from West Virginia Delegate Gary Howell (left), national chairman of the State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus, SEMA's Christian Robinson (second from left) and Daniel Ingber (right).

days to correct suspected violations of California's exhaust noise limits. In 2018, the state passed legislation that removed this ability, which generated significant concern within the \$3-billion exhaust-related marketplace and enthusiast community.

In response, Assembly Member Grayson, along with his colleague, Assembly Member Jim Frazier, authored legislation (AB 390) to immediately reinstate fix-it tickets, which was quickly passed by the Assembly Transportation Committee without opposition. From there, language from the bill was included in a larger budget package (SB 112) and championed by Assembly Member Grayson, who shepherded it past the finish line. With Gov. Gavin Newsom's signature in late September 2019, fix-it tickets were once again being issued to motorists.

Assembly Member Grayson was first elected to serve in the California Assembly in November 2016 as

Included in Assembly Member Grayson's collection are two classic Ford Mustangs, including a '67 Fastback and a '65 coupe that is currently being restored.

the representative for the 14th district, which encompasses portions of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. In 2010, Grayson was elected to serve on the Concord City Council, winning reelection in 2014 and serving on the Council until his election to the Assembly. He also served as Concord's Mayor from 2014–2015.

Assembly Member Grayson is the son of a Teamster father and his mother was a public transit worker. In fact, he was the first in his family to earn a college degree. He also has maintained a license as a general building contractor since 1997.

In addition to being a lawmaker, Assembly Member Grayson, along with his wife Tammy, is also an enthusiast. Included in the Graysons' collection are two classic Ford Mustangs, including a '67 Fastback and a '65 coupe that is currently being restored.

"SEMA members create thousands of jobs in California and contribute greatly to the economic vibrancy of our state. I look forward to working with SEMA for years to come and hopefully having the honor to show and participate in a future SEMA event," said Assembly Member Grayson.

The SEMA Action Network (SAN) congratulates Assembly Member Grayson on his achievement as Legislator of the Year! We look forward to working with him further on pro-hobby efforts.



Turnkey Replica Vehicle Law Gains Further Traction

Hobbyists were enthused in late 2015 when the U.S. Congress enacted a law allowing low-volume vehicle manufacturers to sell turnkey replica cars—vehicles that appear to be 25 years old or older. Four years later, potential customers are still waiting for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to issue a regulation to implement the law. On behalf of frustrated companies and enthusiasts, SEMA sued NHTSA last October for failing to act.

Good news—NHTSA responded to the lawsuit by issuing a proposed rulemaking. SEMA and many industry companies submitted comments and are awaiting issuance of the final rule. Although there is no deadline, the industry is urging NHTSA to complete the mission this summer so that sales may commence. The new law gives customers the choice of purchasing a turnkey replica car. Nevertheless, hobbyists will always have the option of building a kit car or specially constructed vehicle themselves.



If federal regulators can finish the job, DeLorean fans will be able to buy brand-new, fully functional editions of the iconic machine.

Two Easy Things You Can Do to Help Pass the RPM Act and Protect the Future of Motorsports

Now that the RPM Act has been introduced in both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate during the current session of Congress, it's up to the racing community to ensure that our elected officials in Washington, D.C., make passing the bill a top priority! We need you and your club to rally fellow enthusiasts, group members, family and friends to take action and tell Congress to save our racecars. After you send your letter at www.SEMA.org/RPM, here are two easy ways your network can help continue the RPM Act's progress. (The following materials and additional assets can also be found at www.SEMA.org/RPMtools):



1. Promote the RPM Act on websites, such as your club's pages and forums.

- Consider adding custom RPM Act graphics and GIFs to your club's online presence.

You can also print these materials to display in your clubhouse or garage.

- If adding the image to a website, be sure to link each image to www.SEMA.org/RPM. That way, visitors to your site will be sent to the letter-writing campaign directly. The form is short and takes less than 30 seconds to fill out.
- ### 2. Spread the word on social media.
- You and your friends can easily share the following Facebook, Instagram and Twitter posts on social-media platforms. Encourage your contacts to write Congress and share these posts with their friends and contacts.



RACECAR

Facebook (Sample text):

Act now to defend the future of racing! Tell Congress to support the RPM Act (Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act)—a bill to protect our hobby and supporting industry. Send a new letter today, even if you have done so in the past: www.SEMA.org/RPM.

Twitter (Sample text):

Tell your member of Congress to support the #RPMAct and defend the future of racing: www.SEMA.org/RPM.

Instagram (Sample text):

Act now to #SaveOurRacecars! Tell Congress to support the #RPMAct: www.SEMA.org/RPM.

TRUCK OR DRIFTER

Facebook (Sample text):

Act now to defend your right to compete! Tell Congress to support the RPM Act (Recognizing the Protection of Motorsports Act)—a bill to protect our hobby and supporting industry. Send a new letter today, even if you have done so in the past: www.SEMA.org/RPM.

Twitter (Sample text):

Tell your member of Congress to support the #RPMAct and defend your right to compete: www.SEMA.org/RPM.

Instagram (Sample text):

Act now to #SaveOurRacecars! Tell Congress to support the #RPMAct: www.SEMA.org/RPM.



Colby Martin

Unearthing Common Ground

One of the major perks of working at SEMA has been exposure to a wide array of interesting personalities. Like so many, I grew up inspired by the countless influential talents found in the automotive field. No question that the heavy-hitters today are as diverse a crowd as ever. The well-known faces and brands are usually linked to a unique style of craft, innovation or entertainment. While I don't always share the same taste, I can appreciate such expression. At the end of the day, we enthusiasts are united by a common thread: the love and dedication for all things four-wheeled.

In my role with the SEMA Action Network (SAN), the "who's-who" roster includes folks I never considered meeting: elected officials. I'd falsely assumed that nobody in government shared my sense of fun with four wheels prior to this position. Through in-person experiences with lawmakers and staff, my perception has been proven wrong. It turns out that cars and trucks transcend just about every line—even political parties! It's been

believes that his own '67 Ford Mustang Fastback is a 'bipartisan car.' He explains, "My colleagues may have never sat in a musclecar, or even heard one run. And then all of a sudden, they hear that car roar in the basement of the Capitol. It gets their attention—and some of them become very passionate. It causes us to lay down our differences and to appreciate something that is complete Americana all the way."

The life experiences of freshman Congressman Gil Cisneros (D-CA) are fascinating. He represents California's 39th District, which is home to SEMA's Diamond Bar headquarters. A first-time elected official, Rep. Cisneros served 10 years in the Navy, reaching the rank of lieutenant commander. He served in the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Shield and later worked as a shipping and production manager for Frito-Lay. Rep. Cisneros has a bachelor's degree from George Washington University, an MBA from Regis University and a master's from Brown University.

When Rep. Cisneros recently paid a visit to my workplace, it was his passion for Corvettes that struck a chord with me for obvious reasons. "Growing up, my dad and I bonded over our love of cars, and I

have many fond memories working on his old '56 Chevy," he said. "Although I was a proud Corvette owner, I've since been forced to trade it in for a minivan following the birth of my twin boys."

I was unaware that U.S. Representative Norma Torres (D-CA) had her own meaningful connections with our hobby. As a constituent in the 35th District, I've sent her office many personal messages on automotive issues for



U.S. Representative Gil Cisneros (D-CA) celebrates Independence Day at a local car show.

consideration as my elected representative in Congress. I've learned that when given the opportunity, she'll proudly mention that she enjoys driving a '66 Ford Mustang that her husband Louis restored. With that in mind, it was only a matter of time before she too made her way to the SEMA Garage.

During the SEMA Garage tour, Rep. Torres was especially interested to hear about Project Underdog, a special build created with *The Fast and the Furious* franchise star Sung Kang to work with local youth on customizing a '72 Maverick. For Rep. Torres, Project Underdog brought her back to the days when she drove a 302-powered '74 Maverick. Hearing her recount colorful tales to my co-workers and me about time behind the car's wheel left a lasting impression.

What's the big takeaway? While you may not have party affiliation or policy views in common, put these aside and give those elected to represent you and your neighbors a fair chance. Make an effort to connect on topics that are revered equally. Rep. Torres summed up the sentiment nicely. "Visiting the SEMA headquarters in Diamond Bar was like taking a trip down memory lane," she said. "It was great to be around people who have the same passion, love and enthusiasm for hot rods that the greater Inland Empire and I share."

—IGNITED WE STAND!



U.S. Representative Norma Torres (D-CA, center) poses for a photo with SEMA staff.

so refreshing to meet legislators in my home state who have a similar affection.

I first met this edition's cover subject, California Assembly Member Tim Grayson (D-CA), as well as his wife Tammy, at the 2018 SEMA Show. It didn't take long to recognize a kindred spirit. He was excited about the possibility of taking a hot lap in an exhibition Cobra outside the Las Vegas Convention Center. In fact, Assembly Member Grayson



Forward March Toward Proactive Success

Military Surplus Vehicle Template Latest in SEMA-Model Bill Series

Nobody looks forward to a run-in with the law. When it comes to facing rules relating to automobiles, troubles often seem catastrophic. In reality, chances are high that someone else has been faced with resolving a similar matter. Sometimes the best answer to a problem is lying in plain sight—one just needs to know where to look. The key is realizing that help exists and reaching out.

In its fight to protect the automotive community from unfair laws, the SEMA Action Network (SAN) has long battled familiar issues in multiple places. Existing vehicle-related policies and classifications are often well behind the times. In those jurisdictions, outdated and convoluted registration rules create confusion among motorists as well as those charged with applying the laws at the ground level.

Over time, the SAN has crafted unique solu-

tions to combat common difficulties nationwide. Early on, a SEMA-model street-rod/custom-vehicle bill was developed to simplify matters regarding modified vintage and reproduction vehicles for government officials. With enactment of this template into law demonstrating widespread success, the SAN had proof that positive, proactive legislation could serve to create new opportunities for the growth of the auto hobby. As a result, additional model legislation was designed specifically to create reasonable and practical solutions for other specific issues, including those for inoperable project builds, exhaust-noise enforcement and the use of nitrous-oxide systems.

A fresh SEMA-model has been created as a tool for former military surplus vehicles. In recent years, legislatures are responding to the growing interest in this segment among enthusiasts. Unfortunately, states often

define decommissioned vehicles uniquely and may not be authorized for use on public highways. SEMA supports the term “military surplus vehicle” to mean a wheeled, multi-purpose or tactical vehicle, including trailer, that was manufactured for military use by or under the direction of the U.S. Armed Forces or Armed Forces of any other country and was subsequently authorized for sale to civilians. When approved, these laws recognize the important historical and patriotic purpose of these vehicles.

The next time actions threaten one of the subjects mentioned above, don’t make enemies—take the opportunity to build bridges with lawmakers. Working together with a fair approach in-hand will make arriving at a hobby-friendly outcome much more likely. Find each of the SEMA-model templates posted at semaSAN.com/ModelBills.



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