

My name is Susan Britto and I am begging you to do something about the excessive road noise pollution in Vermont specifically due to the proliferation of aftermarket exhausts and the routine use of jake brakes.

I was born and raised in Barre city and members of my family still live there. I used to own a lovely home in Barre that was very close to route 302, the main east/west route to NH, also a truckers' route, and the road of choice to the infamous 'Bike Week' in Laconia, NH, which draws thousands of motorcyclists each summer.

It's hard for me to talk about how awful it was to have to endure the blasting noise, the constant roar of loud motorcycles, the sleepless nights, not being able to enjoy my property that I worked very hard for as a single mother. I'm still traumatized by it all. This topic often reduces me to tears. I loved my home so much--it was a stately Dutch colonial with beautiful curly maple woodwork, a beautiful front porch and a partially secluded back porch. I could never enjoy or have a conversation on either of my porches after the proliferation of modified exhausts. I used to love to walk everywhere in Barre city, but had to stop going on walks in the city when it all became unbearable due to constant roaring, ear-splitting road noise.

Of course I tried to do something about it: I called the Barre city police several times only to be laughed at. Many on the police force had their own loud Harleys. I contacted Les Blomberg at the Noise Pollution Clearinghouse in 2009 and again in 2011 and was surprised by the fact his organization seemingly wasn't doing anything about it. I joined online anti-noise groups, Noise Off and then Noise Free America. Excessively loud, ear-splitting road noise is a problem I've had to deal with for the past two decades.

I live in a more rural place now in Berlin but am within a mile from I-89, and there are days that my peace can still be ruined by ridiculously loud motorcycles and cars--so many have been modified with aftermarket, ear splitting exhausts, and their roar can be heard for miles and miles. I hear jake brakes constantly from a mile or more away. My adult son who lives in San Francisco, CA, stayed in an RV on my property last summer and declared that it's much quieter in San Francisco.

I avoid walking in downtown areas now. I no longer go anywhere near downtown Barre, I don't use route 302 in the summer, I stay home when I know the bikers are out in mass. When I hear ear-splitting bikes and cars now, I have a Tourette's Syndrome-like reaction which I cannot control, cowering, covering my ears, and spewing profanities. I am a different person than I was, much less content in nice weather months, all because of excessively loud, ear-splitting, modified exhausts.

I think you are hearing enough witness testimony to know that Vermont needs to do something about this problem. Excessively loud road noise is a health and community crisis. There are cities and towns across the country with this same problem. There is a success story from the city of Elkhart, Indiana which I have submitted as evidence to you. Please read that story and consider the fact that the enforcement of anti-noise laws there are paying for themselves while reducing crime and vastly improving the environment and health of their citizens.

Thank you for your time and for all you do for the betterment of people in the state of Vermont.

Susan Britto  
Berlin, Vermont