

We came, we saw, we talked... hopefully made a difference!



A beautiful end to a long day lobbying on the 'Hill' at our nation's capitol. Becky's been back several times and can pretty much run the show at meetings with Congress members & staff. And she looks a whole lot better dressed-up than I do!

Not sure how many times I've been to DC to lobby for our customers and cycling in general, but this was the first time I really didn't have much nervousness about it. Maybe this is the 7th or 8th?

Our goal is pretty much always the same; try to get a "Complete Streets" initiative passed by Congress, which would require that all new road projects, along with renovations, take into account the needs of all road users, including cyclists and pedestrians. Beyond that, there are also requests for changes and enhancements to funding mechanisms for bike-centric projects, like rails-to-trails (which are pretty awesome in areas that have abandoned rail lines) and dedicated bikeways.

This summit was looking like it might not happen, with a big storm & extremely-cold weather blanketing the northeast Sunday night,



Sometimes your hero wears an oddly-colored bow tie and leg bands. Representative Earl Blumenauer is such a hero, the most-tireless champion of the bicycle in Washington DC. shutting down flights & trains. We were fortunate that our flights on Monday were scheduled to arrive late enough that the airport had reopened, but many weren't so lucky. The interesting thing about air travel, when things go badly due to weather, is that once flights start up again, priority is not to those who have become stranded, but to those holding tickets for the non-cancelled flight. That means that, if you're original flight was supposed to arrive Monday morning, and flights resumed normal operations Monday afternoon, you might not get to your destination until Wednesday. Thankfully, nearly everyone managed to make it by late Tuesday, so we had a full contingent of bicycle troops descending on The Hill.

It's not too likely we'll see much happen from our efforts though, as the current Congress isn't going to tackle anything controversial (meaning, costs \$\$\$ or ruffles feathers) with elections coming up. We did lay the groundwork though, and a small number of us took on additional work, meeting with tax policy analysts at the Way & Means Committee and elsewhere, regarding the internet sales tax avoidance that not only makes it tougher for brick & mortar retailers (like us!) to compete, but also threatens fire, police, road & school funding to the extent they depend upon sales tax revenues.



The post-event party, held in a large, crowded and very noisy room. Why these are held in such high regard is a mystery..

I'm really looking forward to getting back to work at the shop, and especially getting back on my bike! I'll have missed both Tuesday and Thursday-morning's rides and won't be feeling particularly frisky on Sunday. But between now and my 1:20am Friday-morning arrival at SFO I've got another 8 or so hours of meetings as a board member of the National Bicycle Dealer Association. Thank goodness I have a capable staff that can keep things running in my absence, including Chris, Margarita, Karen, Mike, Andrew, Jose, Charlie, Luis (and Steve, who came up from Los Altos to help on Tuesday).