

February 23, 2015

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair  
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation  
900 Court St., Room 453  
Salem, OR 97301

Senator Beyer:

I am submitting testimony today in response to the Committee's Monday, February 23, 2015 hearing on Senate Bill 192, which permits Class I, II or IV ATVs on a portion of the highway if the vehicle meets certain equipment requirements. I have some concerns I would like to share with the committee.

I researched and co-authored the OHV (Off Highway Vehicle) Safety Statewide Assessment, May 2006 that led to legislation establishing the Oregon Parks and Recreation online OHV safety-training program.

In 2008 I researched and co-authored the Oregon All-terrain Safety Education Manual.

In 1988 I served as Manager, Instructor Training/Coordinator, Education Programs for the ATV Safety Institute. As part of my duties I assisted in writing, developing and testing curriculum materials for the first nationwide All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Safety Program. I also designed and managed the first nationwide ATV Instructor training program. During my tenure I supervised trainers that trained over 1200 licensed ATV Instructors. I feel I am qualified to respond to this legislation and offer the following facts to the committee:


Most, if not all ATVs are already equipped with the safety equipment listed in the bill. The safety equipment does not, however, meet the standards for on-road vehicles. It may meet off-road standards, but not street-legal standards.

Requiring a safety belt or safety harness on a vehicle with no roll bar or roll cage virtually assures serious injury to the operator in a rollover crash. Rollovers are among the most common ATV crashes.

ATVs with solid rear axles (no differential) depend on tire spin/slippage in order to turn. That is, in a turn on loose surfaces the rider shifts body weight inside and forward to weight the inside front wheel and help it turn. The outside rear tire drives the ATV forward but the inside rear tire must slip and spin to allow the turn to occur. On paved surfaces where traction is high, the inside tire cannot slip and tends to drive the vehicle straight ahead regardless of steering input. To my knowledge this is not a problem on ATVs with shaft drive and differential gears.

Based on my experience and technical expertise in the area of ATV operation, I oppose SB 192 as it is currently written and encourage the committee to oppose it as well.

Sincerely,



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