

Colleen Brown
Whiting
LD 276

Senator Black, Representative Roberts, and Members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,

I previously testified in support of modernizing Maine's ATV classification statutes. I am submitting this testimony to express my strong support for the sponsor amendment to LD 276, as it aligns with the position I have already put on record.

This amendment corrects the core structural issue by phasing out outdated weight-based standards and replacing them with clear statutory classifications based on manufacturer-rated width and configuration. That shift brings clarity, consistency, and fairness to registration and enforcement.

The width-based classification model is objective and tied directly to original manufacturer specifications. It eliminates confusion for riders, municipal clerks, and law enforcement. It also reflects how modern utility ATVs are actually built and used.

Just as important, the amendment preserves local control. Trail managers, ATV clubs, and landowners retain full authority to determine which classifications are permitted on specific trails. Nothing in this proposal mandates access. That balance is critical to protecting Maine's trail system and the private landowner relationships that make it possible.

The bill also strengthens landowner protections by making clear they are not responsible for determining classification or trail eligibility and cannot be held civilly liable solely for allowing access. That clarity matters.

Requiring classification to be determined at registration creates transparency for vehicle owners, and the presumption of compliance for stock vehicles protects law-abiding riders from unnecessary enforcement disputes.

Finally, the phased implementation and warning-only transition period demonstrate thoughtful policymaking rather than abrupt regulatory change.

This amendment modernizes the statute while maintaining local control, protecting landowners, and providing clear guidance to registrants and enforcement. I respectfully urge the Committee to support the sponsor amendment to LD 276.

Thank you for your consideration.

Colleen Brown