



ATV Maine
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John Raymond, President

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To Whom It May Concern

April 19, 2023

Dear Distinguished Senators and House of Representative Members of the Inland Fisheries & Wildlife committee, I appear here in this committee hearing to support LD 977. Hi, I am John Raymond and as President of ATV Maine and President of the Northern Timber Cruisers I hope our committee members will also support LD 977. Since the inception of the Gas Tax program study enacted in 2002 it had determined the disbursement of Gas Fuel tax when there only 30,000 + ATVs registered we were receiving \$137,000.00 dollars of these funds due to the amount of registered ATVs. We have grown to over 82,000+ ATVs in 21 years and our Gas Tax funding has failed to grow with us, which has left us at the 2002 level of funding of \$137,000.00. A lot has changed in 21 years, we hope that you can see the huge inequitable funding due to not being updated.

As some of you know we had the Governor's Task Force on ATVs in 2020 of which we established new width and weight limits and out of that Task Force we also agreed to raise the registration from \$45 to \$70 per year to help with maintaining the state trail system for ATVs. This action is helping but after finding out that ATVs are not being treated fairly in a lot of other ways. For instance, administratively we pay more to register our ATVs by almost \$2 a registration, we even split our Gas Tax money by 50% to the Dept yet snowmobiling only 10%. Also, ATVing does not receive any funds from the general fund, we are self-supporting. We are trying to do the right thing and improve our trail system and maintain it in the Dept of LF&W BMP practices yet without the proper funding we can't fulfill their demands because there is not enough funding.

If the committee were to see fit to impose the rules of the present agreement from the 2002 Gas Tax study, we would have an increase of over \$700,000.00 a year more Gas Tax monies to help maintain the trails that we have. With ATVs bringing in over \$775 Million a year in economic growth to the State of Maine and we predict will hit a Billion in the coming years as we continue to grow, we believe that this can be a good solution to help an ailing problem. ATV Maine also knows that a Federal Gas Tax study has been recently completed and believe when we have the data from them, we could then request for a new Gas Tax study, we also believe having the new Gas Tax study done could speed up the process and cost considerably less. Thank you for allowing me to present my testimony and I can try to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

John Raymond
ATV Maine
President