



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1440
TTY: (207) 287-4469

Joseph F. Underwood

290 Skyway Street, Lot 11
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Residence: (207) 762-4921
Joseph.underwood@legislature.maine.gov

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Senator Baldacci, Representative Roberts, and esteemed members of the Inland Fisheries & Wildlife Committee, I am Representative Underwood, representing House District 5, which contains all of Presque Isle. I am here today to support my colleague from Aroostook County, Representative Guerrette, for LD 341, *"An Act to Amend the Definition of 'Oversized ATV' to Increase the Minimum Weight Requirement."* Which would increase the weight threshold from 2,000 pounds to 3,500 pounds.

Aroostook County is home to an extensive and well-maintained network of ATV trails, spanning hundreds of miles and providing critical access for both recreation and work-related activities. Many residents and visitors invest in high-quality, durable side-by-side ATV's which are essential tools for farmers, landowners, sportsmen, and outdoor enthusiasts. These vehicles are designed not only for leisure but also for practical purposes such as transporting supplies, maintaining properties, and supporting local businesses that depend on outdoor recreation.

The current weight limit of 2,000 pounds is outdated and unnecessarily restrictive, excluding many modern side-by-sides that are designed to operate safely and effectively on our trail systems. Manufacturers continue to develop ATVs that are heavier due to improved safety features, stronger frames, and more efficient powertrains, yet these same vehicles are being unfairly classified as oversized under existing law. By adjusting the weight threshold to 3,500 pounds, we acknowledge the evolving nature of ATV use and ensure that responsible riders have access to trails designed for safe and sustainable riding.

This change is not just about recreation—it is about fairness and economic opportunity. Outdoor tourism is a major economic driver in Aroostook County, and ATV users contribute significantly to local businesses, from restaurants and lodging to ATV dealerships and maintenance services. By allowing modern, heavier ATVs to be registered and used on appropriate trails, we are supporting local economies and ensuring that Mainers and visitors alike can continue to enjoy and benefit from our state's vast trail network.

I respectfully urge this committee to pass this legislation and ensure that Maine's ATV laws reflect the needs of those who use these vehicles responsibly for both work and play.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph F. Underwood
State Representative