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LD 19

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Maine Legislature Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Chairpersons: Senator Joseph Baldacci & Representative Tiffany Roberts

RE: Testimony Regarding LD 19 – An Act to Change the Definition of "Oversized
ATV" in the Laws Governing the Registration of All-Terrain Vehicles

Dear Members of the Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony regarding LD 19. I strongly support this bill because the current law restricts families who enjoy trail riding from registering UTVs that accommodate more than two people and provide enclosure for security and comfort. Maine's recreational trails offer a wealth of outdoor experiences, and we should be promoting accessibility rather than imposing unnecessary restrictions that hinder families from fully enjoying them.

Supporting LD 19

Encouraging Family Recreation: By modifying the definition of "oversized ATV," we can enable more families to explore Maine's extensive trail system together safely and comfortably.

Enhancing Accessibility: Enclosed UTVs provide additional security and comfort, making trail riding more accessible to individuals of all ages and abilities.

Boosting Outdoor Tourism and Economy: A more inclusive ATV registration system will encourage more families and outdoor enthusiasts to participate in Maine's recreational opportunities, benefiting local businesses and tourism.

Recommendations

Ensure Clear Trail Access Guidelines: While expanding the ATV definition, regulations should specify designated areas where these vehicles are permitted, ensuring safety and sustainability.

Support Infrastructure and Trail Maintenance: Additional registration revenue from these vehicles should be allocated toward maintaining and improving trail systems.

Collaborate with Stakeholders: Work with landowners, ATV clubs, and conservation groups to ensure responsible expansion of ATV access.

Restrict Street Vehicles from Recreational Trails: To maintain the integrity of recreational trails, we can limit access to street vehicles by enforcing width restrictions and requiring registration specific to trails rather than allowing street-legal vehicles.

Look to Other States for Best Practices: Some states have successfully managed ATV use on trails by implementing separate registration categories for trail-exclusive vehicles, seasonal access permits, and designated trail maintenance funds from ATV registrations. Maine should consider similar strategies to ensure sustainable trail use while allowing larger UTVs access.

Conclusion

Updating Maine's ATV registration laws to accommodate modern UTVs is a necessary step to align regulations with evolving outdoor recreation trends. By making these changes, we can enhance family participation, boost tourism, and ensure responsible trail use. Additionally, looking at other states' successful management strategies can help refine our approach. I respectfully urge the committee to support LD 19.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Colleen Brown