MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 53rd LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Call to Order: By CHAIRMAN ROBERT CLARK, on March 26, 1993, at 3:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Bob Clark, Chairman (R)

Rep. Karyl Winslow, Vice Chairman (R)

Rep. Shiell Anderson (R)

Rep. Joe Barnett (R)

Rep. Bill Endy (D)

Rep. David Ewer (D)

Rep. Pat Galvin (D)

Rep. Marian Hanson (R)

Rep. Vern Keller (R)

Rep. Don Larson (D)

Rep. Bill Ryan (D)

Rep. Wayne Stanford (D)

Rep. Bill Tash (R)

Rep. Randy Vogel (R)

Rep. Tim Whalen (D)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: Rep. Gary Mason (R)

Staff Present: Connie Erickson, Legislative Council

Kimberlee Greenough, Committee Secretary

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and

discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing: SB 417, HB 679, SB 255

Executive Action: SB 255, SB 417, HB 679, SB 416

HEARING ON SB 417

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

SEN. CECIL WEEDING, SD 14, Jordan, stated SB 417 was being presented at the request of the Department of Transportation. This bill helps the Department organize the refund from the gas

tax. This will allow them to setup rules and establish a minimum level of reimbursement.

Proponents' Testimony:

Bill Salisberry, Administrator, Administration Division, Montana Department of Transportation, spoke in favor of SB 417. EXHIBIT 1

Ronna Alexander, Montana Petroleum Marketer; s Association, spoke in favor of SB 417.

Opponents' Testimony: None.

Informational Testimony: None.

Questions From Committee Members and Responses: None.

Closing by Sponsor:

SEN. WEEDING thanked the committee for the hearing and closed.

HEARING ON HB 679

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. ROBERT CLARK, HD 31, Ryegate, stated HB 679 is an act revising the law relating to off-road vehicle use. This bill establishes responsibility of the off-road vehicle operators. It will also provide for off-road vehicle safety training after the year 1994. This bill will help us recover some of the federal funds lost from the motorcycle helmet law.

Proponents' Testimony:

Doug Abelin, Montana Trail Vehicle Rider's Association, spoke in favor of HB 679. EXHIBIT 2

Dal Smilie, Chairman, Montana Motorcycle Safety Advisory Committee, spoke in favor of HB 679. EXHIBITS 3 and 4

Pat Foley, Land-Use Coordinator, Capital Trail Vehicle Association, spoke in favor of HB 679. EXHIBIT 5

Pat Riley, ABATE of Montana, spoke in favor of HB 679.

Darrell McDaniel, Bureau of Land Management, spoke in favor of HB 679.

Arnold Olsen, Administrator, State Parks Division, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, spoke in favor of HB 679. EXHIBIT 6

Linda Ellison, Montana Trail Vehicle Rider's Association, spoke in favor of HB 679.

Opponents' Testimony:

Ernie Nunn, Forest Service, speaking on behalf of David Jolly, Regional Forester, discussed the Forest Service's opposition to HB 679. EXHIBIT 7

John Gatchell, Montana Wilderness Association, stated that his objections are with the provisions in sections 1 and 2. This would allow unlicensed vehicles to travel public roads. The bill would increase enforcement problems by adding to areas where unlicensed vehicles are allowed. We do not have a problem with motorcycles or ATVs which are licensed.

Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Legislative Fund, stated we do not have a problem with the safety program. We do have a problem with provisions in sections 1 and 2 and propose they be struck from the bill.

Informational Testimony: None.

Questions From Committee Members and Responses:

REP. ANDERSON asked what are the funds mentioned on page five of the bill. Doug Abelin stated that section allows that the money given to the Highway Safety Division be transferred to Fish, Wildlife and Parks to fund the safety program.

REP. ANDERSON asked how much money will that be when the funds become available. Mr. Abelin stated that on the fiscal note the total amount of funds for this is not available at this time.

REP. ANDERSON asked if anyone had spoken to people at the Department of Justice. Al Goke stated ISTEA had a provision in it that all states must have a motorcycle helmet law. If that law did not pass 1.5% of federal dollars to the Department of Transportation would be diverted to the 402 program. He stated there is no way to estimate the amount of that money. The money is not matching funds, it is pure federal monies.

- REP. ANDERSON asked if there was already money available for the traffic safety program. Mr. Goke said yes.
- REP. ANDERSON asked if Mr. Goke could give the committee an estimate of the funds. Mr. Goke replied that, based on construction monies this year, he would guess it would be approximately \$1.5 million.
- REP. VOGEL asked how much land is under his supervision in the Helena National Forest. Mr. Nunn replied approximately one million acres.
- REP. VOGEL asked if there are trails available. Mr. Nunn answered, yes.
- REP. VOGEL asked if the trails could be limited to unlicensed drivers. Mr. Nunn said yes.
- REP. VOGEL asked if REP. CLARK could define a responsible adult. REP. CLARK stated that most parents are responsible, however, some are not. He also stated he has amendments to propose. EXHIBIT 8
- REP. VOGEL asked if it could "accompanied by a licensed adult" rather than "responsible licensed adult". REP. CLARK stated that could be put in the bill.
- REP. VOGEL asked if we are creating a new traffic offense on page 3, section 3, line 10. REP. CLARK stated these are the rules for snowmobiles now.
- REP. VOGEL asked if we are adopting a new statute, do we need to establish a penalty or will this automatically be under the snowmobile rules. REP. CLARK stated this would be covered under current code.
- REP. TASH asked if the statutory appropriations apply to safety. Mr. Goke stated that applies to all statutes.
- REP. TASH asked if the appropriation only dealt with safety. Mr. Goke said that, according to his understanding, it would.
- REP. TASH asked if there are any statutory appropriations with regard to noxious weed control? Mr. Foley stated one of the intentions of the safety program is to include natural resource control.
- REP. TASH asked if there were any allowances for noxious weed control. Mr. McDaniel replied there are programs for noxious weed control.
- REP. KELLER asked what would be the method of monitoring noxious

- weed control. Mr. Nunn said it is handled through public education.
- REP. WHALEN stated it appears sections 1 and 2 allow, through cooperative agreement, unlicensed off-highway vehicles on these roads and asked if that was correct? REP. CLARK replied in the affirmative.
- REP. WHALEN asked what the rational was for allowing unlicensed vehicles on these roads. REP. CLARK stated this is a training program to get them to operate in a safe manner.
- REP. WHALEN asked if it only allows them to do this under the training program. REP. CLARK stated yes. Mr. Abelin stated we can't mandate the forest lands or the BLM lands. This would build a platform for an educational program. He also stated everyone is open to discussion and amendments.
- REP. WHALEN asked what is the intent of sections 1 and 2. Mr. Abelin stated it is not our intent to waive Montana law, merely to change it in order for us to be able to ride lower level roads. We are negotiable on the unlicensed driver issue.
- REP. EWER asked if the intent was to bridge trail head to trail head. Mr. Abelin stated that is the intent of part of the bill.
- REP. EWER asked if the second intent was to enable people to use these vehicles safely. Mr. Abelin stated the safety portion of the bill is to encourage people to become safe operators.
- REP. EWER asked if there are many situations where people have to break state law to go from trail head to trail head. Mr. Nunn replied, yes, there are cases.
- REP. EWER stated this would be a "catch 22" situation.
- REP. EWER asked if the two main purposes of the bill are safety and trail head to trail head. REP. CLARK stated the safety issue is the main purpose of the bill.
- REP. EWER indicated currently, if a bike is used off the road, you have a decal. He asked if, on the road, you need a license plate.
- REP. CLARK stated the bike is only required to have a decal and be registered with the state.
- REP. EWER asked if these decals are visible. REP. CLARK stated no, you can't read them from a distance.
- REP. EWER asked why there is an immediate effective date. REP. CLARK stated there is an amendment to take care of that.

- REP. VOGEL asked if this bill just pertains to the training. Ms. Lodman stated our hope is to provide training to anyone who would want training, however, specifically for youth.
- REP. VOGEL asked doesn't the manufacturer of these vehicles warn that no one under age 14 should be on these vehicles. Ms. Lodman stated the ages are from 12 to 16. She stated we would follow the manufacturer's request.
- REP. VOGEL asked, on page two, line four where it says responsible adult, what does "accompanied" mean?
 REP. CLARK stated it could mean on the same machine but in most cases it would be on a separate machine. The intent is for an adult to be with the minor.
- REP. TASH asked how will the funds being transferred to Fish, Wildlife and Parks be used. Mr. Olson stated it hasn't been determined yet.
- REP. TASH asked if the funds would be directed to safety. Mr. Olson said yes.
- REP. TASH asked what is the view of the Fish, Wildlife and Parks about the noxious weed control issue. Mr. Olson replied the department is concerned about noxious weed control and does not off-road vehicle use.
- REP. STANFORD asked if this safety program will be similar to the hunter's safety program. Ms. Lodman stated they hope it would be similar and that there will be training sites.
- REP. ANDERSON asked if the money goes to the Highway Safety Division. REP. CLARK said yes.
- REP. ANDERSON asked if it is appropriated by legislative action. Mr. Goke replied no.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. CLARK, in closing, stated this bill is not perfect and it needs some work. He also stated he has no problem with the amendments, and believes the bill needs to get out of committee and we need to sit down with the people concerned and work out the problems.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 255

Motion: REP. HANSON MOVED TO TAKE SB 255 OFF THE TABLE.

Discussion:

- REP. BARNETT stated he is against taking SB 255 off the table.
- REP. ANDERSON also spoke against taking SB 255 off of the table.
- REP. HANSON stated she was under the impression SB 255 gave truckers a window until 1994 to receive a class B certificate.
- REP. ANDERSON indicated the problem is these people have to pay GVW fees.

Vote: SB 255 BE TAKEN OFF THE TABLE. Motion carried.

Motion: REP. HANSON MOVED SB 255 BE CONCURRED IN.

Motion: REP. BARNETT MADE A SUBSTITUTE MOTION SB 255 BE NOT CONCURRED IN.

Discussion:

- REP. EWER asked what are we trying to preserve. REP. BARNETT stated this bill does prevent the farmers and ranchers from trucking for hire. Farmers don't have much to exchange for hauling.
- REP. ANDERSON stated these class B regulations must adhere to fee schedules. He also stated these people should be allowed to compete in a free market situation.
- REP. BARNETT said he believes regulation creates a monopoly.
- REP. HANSON stated she is against the be not concurred in motion. When they need trucks they usually can get them.
- REP. ANDERSON replied farmers/ranchers don't have trucks when they need them.

Motion/Vote: SB 255 BE NOT CONCURRED IN. Motion failed.
EXHIBIT 11

Vote: SB 255 BE CONCURRED IN. Motion carried. EXHIBIT 12

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 417

Motion: REP. HANSON MOVED SB 417 BE CONCURRED IN. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 679

Motion: REP. STANFORD MOVED HB 679 DO PASS.

Discussion:

- REP. CLARK asked what a maintenance level three was. Mr. Abelin stated the forest manual has five levels of roads; level five being paved and level one a trail.
- REP. KELLER asked if the trails were not used at all. Mr. Abelin stated they already have the authority to use these trails.
- REP. VOGEL asked if levels three, two, and one were enforced. Mr. Abelin replied that those are the enforced roads.
- REP. WHALEN asked if, on road levels one, two, and three you will have to be licensed and levels four and five don't require you to be licensed. Mr. Abelin said that was correct.
- REP. WHALEN stated in the bill you would have to negotiate permission with BLM or the U.S. Forest Service. Mr. Abelin stated it is their digression.
- REP. ENDY stated he understood this would open roads the forest service has closed. REP. CLARK stated this is not to open closed roads it is to give access to roads currently open.
- REP. TASH stated this bill is broad and needs to be tightened. This concern about the noxious weeds is a viable one. We need to take care of the roads that are designated.
- REP. STANFORD stated what the big question is if we want people who are not licensed to use these roads.
- REP. ANDERSON stated the issue of weeds is a large problem.
- REP. WHALEN asked what section three addresses. REP. CLARK stated section 3 addresses the safety aspect of the bill, which is patterned after the snowmobile laws.
- REP. STANFORD stated he doesn't feel this bill creates more of a problem than we already have.
- REP. LARSON stated he sees several problems with this bill. The forest service in his area will not allow ATV's that are not street legal on their lands. There is an enforcement problem. We will be putting highway patrol out on all of these roads. REP. CLARK stated the highway patrol already has jurisdiction.
- REP. CLARK said the forest service is willing to work with this

bill and so is the off-road vehicle associations.

REP. TASH stated he has a problem with the jurisdiction and the enforcement. REP. CLARK stated the problems with jurisdiction and enforcement are present now.

REP. VOGEL stated he disagrees with amendments two and three, which allow minors and unlicensed kids out on the roads.

REP. STANFORD stated children are already out there riding these off-road vehicles. Hopefully this bill will provide education.

REP. CLARK stated theses children are riding with or without their parents' permission. With this education we can teach them to wear helmets and how to safely operate the vehicles.

REP. VOGEL noted that this safety program doesn't start until 1994. He suggested that every young person out there be required to go through this training. REP. CLARK indicated he doesn't see any problem with that.

REP. VOGEL stated he would like to segregate numbers two, three, seven, and eight out of the amendments.

Motion/Vote: REP. STANFORD MADE A SUBSTITUTE MOTION TO AMEND HB 679 AS STATED IN NUMBERS ONE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX, NINE, AND TEN OF THE AMENDMENTS. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion:

REP. CLARK said he would like to strike the immediate effective date.

Motion/ Vote: REP. CLARK MADE A SUBSTITUTE MOTION TO AMEND HB 679 BY STRIKING THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE. Motion carried unanimously. EXHIBIT 9

Discussion:

REP. VOGEL stated he would like to strike page 2, line 13 and line 14 and page 3, line 6 and 7. He also would like to amend that only unlicensed drivers who have successfully completed an off-road vehicle training program sponsored by the Fish, Wildlife and Parks could use these off-road vehicles.

Connie Erickson suggested to strike page 2 subsection E and on page 3 strike subsection E and in section 4 possibly add REP. VOGEL'S amendments.

REP. ANDERSON stated he feels the whole concept of this bill was so parents could take their children out and teach them to ride these off-road vehicles.

Motion/Vote: REP. VOGEL MADE A SUBSTITUTE MOTION TO AMEND HB 679 AS SUGGESTED BY MS. ERICKSON. Motion carried with REPS. ENDY, STANFORD, ANDERSON, TASH, and EWER voting no. EXHIBIT 9

Discussion:

REP. LARSON said he would like to amend HB 679, and that the amendment would help control the noxious weeds.

REP. CLARK indicated that, to date, the Forest Service has not agreed to what this bill is proposing.

REP. LARSON stated he would like all of these vehicles to meet the requirements requested by the Forest Service.

REP. CLARK stated they already do.

REP. LARSON asked what does the Forest Service require, a license plate or a decal. Ms. Ellison stated they would need a license plate.

REP. VOGEL asked if these off-road vehicles are required to have headlights while they are on the roads. Currently, as this bill is written, they are allowed to drive at night but are not required to have a headlight.

REP. ANDERSON stated he would like to speak against REP. LARSON'S amendments.

REP. TASH stated he feels this bill is a bad bill. There are two different things in this bill.

Motion/Vote: REP. LARSON MOVED TO AMEND HB 679. Motion failed.

Discussion:

Ms. Erickson explained the new amendments. EXHIBIT 9

<u>Vote</u>: HB 679 DO PASS AS AMENDED. Motion carried with REPS. WINSLOW, WHALEN, TASH, EWER, and KELLER voting no. EXHIBIT 14

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 416

Motion/Vote: REP. WHALEN MOVED TO RECONSIDER SB 416. Motion carried with REPS. WINSLOW, ANDERSON, TASH, HANSON, and KELLER voting no. EXHIBIT 15

Motion: REP. WHALEN MOVED SB 416 BE CONCURRED IN.

Discussion:

- REP. WHALEN stated he would like to amend SB 416. EXHIBIT 10
- REP. LARSON spoke in favor of REP. WHALEN'S amendments.
- REP. VOGEL asked if \$50,000 will be brought back to the general fund.
- REP. HANSON stated now only the larger companies have to pay electronically and have no float time.
- REP. WHALEN stated he was in favor of the amendment. This will give the smaller businesses a break.
- Motion/Vote: REP. WHALEN MOVED TO AMEND SB 416. Motion carried with REPS. ANDERSON and WINSLOW voting no.
- <u>Vote</u>: SB 416 BE CONCURRED IN AS AMENDED. Motion carried with REPS. WINSLOW, ANDERSON, HANSON, and KELLER voting no. EXHIBIT 13

HOUSE HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 26, 1993

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ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 5:30 p.m.

ROBERT C. CLARK, Chairman

KIMBERLEE GREENOUGH, Secretary

RC/kg

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

COMMITTEE

ROLL CALL

DATE <u>March 26, 1993</u>

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
REP. KARYL WINSLOW - VICE CHAIR			
REP. SHIELL ANDERSON	,/		
REP. JOE BARNETT	<i>i</i> /		
REP. BILL ENDY	<u> </u>		
REP. DAVID EWER	V		
REP. PAT GALVIN - VICE CHAIR			
REP. MARIAN HANSON	i/		
REP. VERN KELLER			
REP. DON LARSON			
ŔEP. GARY MASON			
REP. BILL RYAN	<u> </u>		
REP, WAYNE STANFORD			
REP BILL TASH	\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \		
REP. RANDY VOGEL	<u> </u>		
REP. TIM WHALEN	<i>V</i>		
CHAIR BOB CLARK			

March 29, 1993 Page 1 of 1

Mr. Speaker: We, the committee on <u>Highways and Transportation</u> report that <u>Senate Bill 416</u> (third reading copy -- blue) be concurred in as amended.

Signed: Robert C. Clark, Chair

And, that such amendments read:

Carried by: Rep. Whalen

1. Title, line 7. Strike: "\$200,000" Insert: "\$500,000"

2. Page 2, line 12.
Strike: "\$200,000"
Insert: "\$500,000"

-END-

March 29, 1993 Page 1 of 1

Mr. Speaker: We, the committee on <u>Highways and Transportation</u> report that <u>Senate Bill 417</u> (third reading copy -- blue) <u>be</u> concurred in and be placed on consent calendar.

Signed: Robert C. Clark, Chair

Carried by: Rep. Whalen

Committee Vote: Yes No No

March 29, 1993 Page 1 of 1

Mr. Speaker: We, the committee on <u>Highways and Transportation</u> report that <u>Senate Bill 255</u> (third reading copy -- blue) <u>be</u> concurred in .

Signed: Robert C. Clark, Chair

Carried by: Rep. Gilbert

Committee Vote: Yes _____, No _____.

March 29, 1993 Page 1 of 2

Mr. Speaker: We, the committee on Highways and Transportation report that House Bill 679 (first reading copy -- white) do pass as amended .

Signed: Robert C. Clark; Chair

And, that such amendments read:

1. Title, line 13. Following: "TRAINING;" Insert: "AND"

2. Title, lines 13 and 14. Strike: "; AND" on line 13 through "DATE" on line 14

3. Page 1, line 21. Following: "state"

Insert: "that qualify as maintenance level 3 or greater in the United States forest service handbook"

4. Page 2, lines 13 and 14.

Strike: lines 13 and-14 in their entirety

Renumber: subsequent subsection

5. Page 2, line 18. Following: "roads --" Insert: "enforcement --"

6. Page 2, line 18. Following: "exceptions."

Insert: "(1) Except as provided in subsection (2), U.S. bureau of land management roads in the state that qualify as collector roads in the U.S. bureau of land management manual, whether or not they meet the definition of a public highway by the laws of this state, are subject to the traffic laws of this state, and the Montana highway patrol and county sheriffs of this state have jurisdiction to investigate accidents and enforce the Montana traffic laws on those roads."

Renumber: subsequent subsections

Committee Vote: Yes ____, No _____. 7. Page 2, lines 24 and 25. Following: "by the" on line 24

Strike: remainder of line 24 through "supervisor" on line 25

Insert: "authorized officer"

8. Page 3, lines 6 and 7.

Strike: lines 6 and 7 in their entirety

9. Page 3, line 11. Following: "roads."

Insert: "(1)"
Strike: "An"

9= 178

Insert: "Except as provided in subsection (2), an"

10. Page 3, line 20.

Following: line 19

Insert: "(2) An off-highway vehicle may not be operated on or across a highway that is part of the federal-aid interstate system."

11. Page 3, line 21.

Following: "responsibilities"
Insert: " -- unlicensed operators"

12. Page 4.

Following: line 23

Insert: "(5) An unlicensed operator who has successfully completed the off-highway vehicle safety education training program offered by the department of fish, wildlife, and parks may operate an off-highway vehicle on a maintenance level 3 or greater forest service road under the direct supervision of a licensed adult."

13. Page 7, lines 20 and 21.

Strike: Section 8 in its entirety

-END-

Date: March 26, 1993

EXHIBIT 1 DATE 3-26-93 SB 417

Senate Bill 417

SUBMITTED BY: WILLIAM SALISBURY, ADMINISTRATOR

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

"AN ACT REVISING THE BAD DEBT CREDIT ALLOWANCE ON GASOLINE AND SPECIAL FUEL TAXES PAYABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION; AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT TO WRITE OFF THE COLLECTION OF A TAX, PENALTY, OR INTEREST DUE WHENEVER THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT IT IS NOT COST-EFFECTIVE TO ATTEMPT TO COLLECT THE TAX, PENALTY, OR INTEREST".

Amends current statutes 15-70-221 and 15-70-328 to reduce the State's financial liability covering bad debt credit allowance of gasoline distributor's and special fuel dealers by adding eligibility requirements. Effective upon passage and approval.

The Montana Department of Transportation appears before this committee to offer our support for Senate Bill 417.

This amends current statutes 15-70-221, MCA, and 15-70-328, MCA, to reduce the state's financial liabilities concerning bad-debt credit allowance for gasoline distributors and special fuel dealers by adding eligibility requirements. Gasoline distributors and special fuel dealers are bound by law to remit the collected tax to the State; however, in some cases, when the distributor or dealer doesn't receive payment by the customer for many reasons, the State is obliged to relieve the dealer or distributor of the tax due. Certain minuses of the bad debt credit allowance exist:

- Forgiving a debt in which neither the tax nor the amount of the sale is collected, yet the tax refund is requested by the debtor.
- Fuel dealers requesting a bad-debt credit for individual NSF checks received for individual fuel purchases.
- Re-issuance of credit to non-creditable accounts, ultimately leading to further future losses.
- Failure by gasoline distributors and special fuel dealers to forward taxes collected on payment schedules remitted by debtors until after the final payment has been made.

To eliminate these abuses Senate Bill 417 states:

- Fuel dealers are entitled to a credit for tax that's paid to the department on those sales of fuel with a tax liability of \$200.00 or greater;
- Fuel dealers are entitled to a credit for tax paid to the department on those sales of fuel for which the distributor has not forgiven any liability;
- Fuel dealers may not declare accounts of the purchaser more than once during a three-year period;
- Any amount collected by the fuel dealer on the accounts declared worthless must be prorated with the tax due.

Also, as a result of the creation of the Montana Department of Transportation, some of the components of the Motor Fuels Tax Division of the Montana Department of Revenue didn't transfer to the Montana Department of Transportation, but remained as part of the Montana Department of Revenue. The ability to write-off negligible debts was one of the these components. Senate Bill 417 would allow the Montana Department of Transportation to write-off negligible debt collection.

The Montana Department of Transportation urges this committee to give this proposal a do-pass recommendation.

House Highways Committee Chairman, Clark March 25, 1993 EXHIBIT 2 - 26-73
HB 679

What this bill does;

- 1. Revises Montana law pertaining to "Off-Highway Vehicle" use.
- 2. Determines which level of Forest Service & BLM roads are usable to OHV,s.
- 3. Allows the crossing of public roads and describes methods to properly do so; determines a Off-High vehicle may not be operated on or across a federal-aid interstate system road.
- 4. Determines that a OHV operator is responsible for his own injuries or damage resulting from risks inherent in the sport of OHV use; and promotes the safe personal operation of OHV so as to avoid injuries and damage of personal property.
- 5.Provides for a OHV "Safety Training Program" after 1994;appropriates Federal funds for OHV Safety training program; amending sections 17-7-502 and 61-8-111, MCA; and provides an immediate effective date.

By adopting this bill, the Legislature will provide a OHV program that will be safer for all parties; provide the youths of this state with the chance to improve their safety awareness, ethics, and environment education; teach them to understand and wear the best safety Management equipment, and to use their OHV in a safe and yet fun manner; help them learn to protect the opportunities that we as Montanan's have and enjoy. And last, but most important, is that this bill will also provide them with safety knowledge that might one day save theirs or someone elses life.

The best way to reduce the risks of OHV accidents is to have a system of trails, roads, and areas large enough to spread users out and therefore mimize impacts to the areas, and reduce the risks of running into each other. This bill will help us have those areas and opportunities.

Thanks, Doug Abelin

Mextica'

Montana has about 18,000 parcels of land and under current law we cannot ride any of except on designated roads, of which there are none that we know of. Changing this law, as this bill asks may one day provide us with access to some of our own lands to ride. So we would not have to rely on the National Forests, and the BLM. But for now, thats all we have!

CURRENT MONTANA MOTOR VEHICLE CODES PERTAINING TO OHV USES.

March 7, 1993.

- 61-8-110; Forest developement roads; Special Service Roads; Defined!
- (1) "Forest Developement Road;" Is defined as a; Road located on National Forest lands; or on Right-of-Way; aquired by USA and used for the Protection, Administration, and Utilization of the National Forests and other lands Administered by the US Forest Service.
- (2) "Special Service Road;" is defined as a Forest developement road, or segment thereof, The Right-of-way for which is controlled by the US and which is not a part of the Highway System of the state or or of a county, or other public road authority of this state, designated by the forest service, persuant to the regulations of the Secretary of the United States department of Agriculture, as a special service road for the purpose of controlling and regulating its use to accomplish the purpose of the secretary of agriculture's regulations applicable to the administration of the forest development transport system. history: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 139, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 32-2124.3.
- 61-8-111. State laws applicable on forest development roads-enforcment. Forest development roads in the state, whether or not they meet the definition of a public highway by the laes of this state, are subject to the traffic laws of this state and the Montana highway patrol and county sheriffs of this state shall have jurisdiction thereon to investigate accidents and enforce the Montana traffic laws. history: En. Sec. 2, Ch. 139, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 32-2124.4.

 Highway Patrol jurisdiction, Title 44, ch. 1, part 10. public highway, 61-1-202. Cross-References: Sheriffs department, Title 7, ch. 32, part 21.
- 61-8-112. Special service roads not subject to state law enforcement-when. When forest development roads, or segments thereof, are designated as special service roads by the United States forest service and by such designation are subjected to traffic rules in addition to or in conflict with the Montana traffic laws, neither the additional nor conflicting traffic rules so prescribed by the forest service nor the traffic law with which they conflict shall be within the jurisdiction of law enforcement officers of this state as to such special service road.
 - history: En. Sec. 3, ch 139, L. 1971; R.C.M. 1947, 32-2124.5. cross-references Cession and retrocession of jurisdiction. Title 2, ch. 1, part2.

DATE 3-26-93 HF_679

March 26, 1993

TO: House Transportation Committee

FROM: Dal Smilie, Chairman Montana Motorcycle Safety advisory

Committee

AMA Vice Chairman

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 679

Industry figures estimate that there are 22,400 off highway motorcycles in Montana. This does not count the 7,500 or so dual purpose motorcycles or tourist motorcycles.

These users enjoy the trails in Montana and contribute to the Montana economy. Their contribution is very similar to the contribution made by snowmobilers.

This bill provides for a much needed federally funded OHV safety program.

This bill sets out responsibility code like that in place for ski areas. This will protect both public land managers and private land owners who allow OHV use on their trails.

Montana motorcyclists have drafted and supported legislation to help upgrade and build trails with their user fees. Other funds are just becoming available from state and federal off road gas taxes. There should be increased interest in the use of the trail systems.

Off road users enjoy "loop" trails and trail heads that have a campground immediately available. Where those conditions do not exist short stretches of road connect the "loop" or lead from the campground.

HB 679 allows user groups and public land managers to <u>plan</u> the use of certain roads to create loops or access to adequate parking and camping. This act does not force any change in use but <u>allows</u> it <u>if and only if</u> public land managers approve.

Trail users have sought to implement similar plans but were told by federal land managers that state law was the problem. This bill would change state law so that such <u>planning could be agreed too</u>. It places no responsibility on federal land managers to agree, it just allows them the option.

The USFS has reviewed this proposal for two months. Wednesday they indicated they would oppose it because it is a <u>regional POLICY</u> to not allow more than one type of user on "two track" roads. Currently licensed autos, motorcycles, quadricycles, log trucks, horses, bicycles, hikers and skiers can use the same "two track" roads. Is the USFS going to segregate those users? Of course not.

The USFS has "de facto" allowed OHVs on these roads. They allow it in other states. HB 679 will merely make that lawful.



EXHIBIT 4 DATE 3-26-93 BB 679

33 Collegeview Road, P.O. Box 6114, Westerville, Ohio 43081-6114

Telephone (614) 891-2425 Fax: (614) 891-5012

March 26, 1993

The Honorable Robert C. Clark Chairman House Highways and Transportation Committee State Capitol Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Chairman Clark:

The American motorcyclist Association is the world's largest organization of motorcycling enthusiasts. On behalf of our Montana members, we write in support of H.B. 679, which would allow limited access to some designated Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management roads by unlicensed off-highway recreational vehicles.

Similar systems are already in place and operating well in Colorado, California and Utah. So far as we are aware, these programs have not caused any problems.

The legislation would allow the manager of the area to make the final decision on availability of routes. This course of action does appear to offer the appropriate safeguards.

On behalf of our Montana members, we respectfully request your support of H.B. 679. The bill provides for suitable access in an appropriate manner. Thank you for your time in this matter.

Sincerely,

Eriz J. Lundquist

Legislative Affairs Specialist Government Relations Department

EXHIBIT 5 DATE 3-26-93 HB 679

Supporting Testimony on HB679 by Pat Foley
Land Use Coordinator, Capital Trail Vehicle Association
Before the House Highways Committee
March 26, 1993

This testimony is in reference to Sections 1 and 2 of HB679 concerning certain types of allowable Off-Highway-Vehicle use on public lands in Montana. Currently, the majority of OHV trail systems within the state require some use of forest development or BLM roads to access riding areas, trail heads from staging, camping, or other riding areas. Also, many two-track primitive roads are illegal for non-licensed use, because they are classified as forest development roads, and as such are illegal for this appropriate use under state law.

Section 1 of HB679 allows the forest supervisor, under certain conditions, to designate certain sections of forest roads as plural use, to allow OHV access to these areas. This does not mandate plural use, rather it allows the supervisor to exercise discretion in such cases as might be acceptable. At this time, forest service personnel have repeatedly told the OHV community that their hands are tied concerning plural use because of state law. OHV'ers would be allowed to negotiate directly with the Forest Service when needed, without the extra layer of state regulation forbidding such action.

Section 2 clarifies allowable OHV operation on BLM roads. Currently, state law is not applicable to any roads on BLM land in Montana. This section would restrict OHV use to licensed vehicles and operators on collector-class roads, with exceptions permitted similar to Forest Service requirements.

At present, liability would rest on Montana for implicitly encouraging illegal use of forest development roads. When a family inquires at a district forest office and is told where to ride and where to camp, yet access to the riding area is impossible without currently illegal use of the access road, the responsible party for this situation is largely the state of Montana, through existing law. If an accident were to occur (no proper signing, no speed restrictions, etc.) on the road section in question, it might place the state in a delicate position.

In addition to educating users about resource protection and trail ethics, OHV groups are working hard to obtain user compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. At present, it is impossible to comply with state law because of our inability to legally access riding areas. Passage of this bill would allow us to demand compliance under all circumstances.

EXHIBIT_______

DATE____3-26-93

HB_____679

HB 679 March 26, 1993

Testimony presented by Arnold Olsen, Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks before the House Highways and Transportation Committee

The Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, by statute, has the responsibility for coordinating Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) trail development and safety education programs. We work closely with state, federal and private land managers and with OHV clubs to provide OHV trail riding opportunities and to provide riders with safety-related information as well as legal and ethical responsibilities.

We support this bill on the basis that it will expand the riding opportunities for OHV users and provide funding for a statewide OHV rider training course.

This bill allows registered OHV travel on portions of Forest Service and BLM roads in order to get from one trail head to another. The conditions of the bill help to provide for a safe corridor of travel.

This bill also allows OHV users to lawfully cross public roads to get from one riding area to another and it establishes an OHV rider's assumption of responsibility. These sections are modeled after current snowmobile laws which have proven effective.

Due to limited funds, OHV rider education and training has, to this point, been very limited. This bill authorizes funding for a more comprehensive statewide OHV rider training program. Additional dollars would allow the department to teach OHV users, especially youth, safe and responsible riding practices through hands-on training and/or classroom instruction. The program would include ATV and motorcycle safety, ethics, and trail etiquette.

Funding that may be available is uncertain. Depending on funding, the department may need either an FTE or a contractor to coordinate training efforts and site maintenance.

EXHIBIT 7

DATE 3-26-93

HB 679

STATEMENT OF DAVID F. JOLLY, REGIONAL FORESTER FOREST SERVICE, NORTHERN REGION UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Before the

Highways and Transportation Committee Montana State House of Representatives

Concerning House Bill No. 679 entitled 'AN ACT REVISING THE LAW RELATING TO OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE USE: ALLOWING OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE USE ON CERTAIN FOREST AND BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ROADS; ALLOWING OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES TO CROSS PUBLIC ROADS UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS; ESTABLISHING A STANDARD OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE OPERATORS; PROVIDING FOR OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE SAFETY TRAINING; AFTER 1994; APPROPRIATE FEDERAL FUNDS FOR OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE SAFETY TRAINING; AMMENDING SECTIONS 17-7-502 AND 61-2-111, MCA.*

March 26, 1993

CHAIRMAN CLARK AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

For the record, my name is Ernie Nunn, Supervisor of the Helena National Forest. I am speaking on behalf of Northern Regional Forester, David Jolly. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing and to share the USDA Forest Service position on House Bill 679.

The Forest Service opposes House Bill No. 679. We support current Montana State law as written and feel that HB 679 does not provide any desired additional authority or flexibility in the management of Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use by the Forest Service.

As we interpret the language in section 1 of this bill, it would amend Section 61-8-111, MCA, to permit off-highway vehicle use on Forest Development roads (FDRs) when certain conditions are met. This use would be permitted at the discretion of the Forest Service. The Forest Service already has the authority and flexibility to manage traffic on Forest Development Roads under the Code of Federal Regulations; therefore, the bill is not further enabling in this regard. Additionally, it would appear that the bill could be interpreted to affect cooperative law enforcement efforts on exempted Forest Development roads. Given the sound cooperation in law enforcement with the State under current legislation, we would sincerely hope that nothing weaken this relationship.

The bill also allows for mixed vehicle traffic (street legal/non-street legal) at the same time on Forest Development roads, as well as unlicensed, minor operators. In other words, a minor, non-licensed operator on a 3-wheeler could be sharing the road with a logging truck. Northern Region Forest Service policy does not allow the mixing of street legal and non-street legal vehicles on forest development roads at the same time. The mixing of traffic types and operators on these roads is not permitted because of safety concerns and the risks and liability associated with such use. Therefore, while enactment of HB 679 would allow the mixing of traffic on Forest roads, this mixed use conflicts with Northern Region Forest Service policy and would be prohibited by the Forest Service.

Section 2 of the bill pertains to the Bureau of Land Management. We defer to them on this section.

Section 3 of the bill allows OHV crossing of public roads in certain circumstances. Again, this is a critical safety issue. This is particularly true in situations where OHVs cross public roads in high traffic areas. We believe the safety and liability issue cannot be ignored and outweigh perceived benefits.

Section 4 discusses OHV operator responsibilities and liability. We feel this section does not address mixed traffic safety concerns, nor is there mention of operator responsibility to prevent resource

damage. Further, we would suggest that the liability language contained in this bill reflect or strengthen the State of Montana's current liability laws.

The Forest Service supports educational training programs for off-highway vehicle use. We sponsor the "Tread Lightly" program which focuses on environmentally conscious, responsible use of OHVs on public lands. The concept of educational training is one which we strongly support. Since this portion of bill redefines management of, rather than creation of, OHV safety educational training, we defer to Montana State's Departments of Justice and Fish, Wildlife, and Parks on these sections.

The Forest Service believes that the use of OHVs is an appropriate recreational use of the National Forests. Street legal OHVs are not prohibited from any non-restricted FDRs. This translates into over 27,000 miles of Forest Development roads which are available for their use in the Northern Region...this is over 56% of the Northern Region's total road system. In addition, many miles of Forest trails currently provide opportunities for both street legal and non-street legal OHV use.

While the Forest Service does not support this bill, there are opportunities for identifying additional Forest Development roads for use by OHVs. We welcome the opportunity to work with user groups and sponsors to this legislation to facilitate a case-by-case review of roads which might be suitable for OHV use on the National Forests in Montana. We have recently participated in meetings with these groups and sponsors and will continue to do so in the future.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to share the Forest Service's position on this bill. This completes my testimony. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

EXHIBIT_8

DATE 3-26-93

Amendments to House Bill No. 679**HB.** 579 First Reading Copy (WHITE)

Requested by Representative Clark For the Committee on Highways

Prepared by Valencia Lane March 22, 1993

1. Page 1, line 21. Following: "state"

Insert: "that qualify as maintenance level 3 or greater in the
 United States forest service handbook"

2. Page 2, line 13.

Following: "unlicensed"

Insert: "minor"

3. Page 2, line 15. Following: "Each" Insert: "minor"

4. Page 2, line 18. Following: "roads --" Insert: "enforcement --"

5. Page 2, line 18.

Following: "exceptions."

Insert: "(1) Except as provided in subsection (2), U.S. bureau of land management roads in the state that qualify as collector roads in the U.S. bureau of land management manual, whether or not they meet the definition of a public highway by the laws of this state, are subject to the traffic laws of this state, and the Montana highway patrol and county sheriffs of this state have jurisdiction to investigate accidents and enforce the Montana traffic laws on those roads."

Renumber: subsequent subsections

6. Page 2, lines 24 and 25. Following: "by the" on line 24

Strike: remainder of line 24 through "supervisor" on line 25

Insert: "authorized officer"

7. Page 3, line 6.

Following: "unlicensed"

Insert: "minor"

8. Page 3, line 8.
Following: "Each"
Insert: "minor"

9. Page 3, line 11.
Following: "roads."
Insert: "(1)"

Strike: "An"

Insert: "Except as provided in subsection (2), an"

10. Page 3, line 20.
Following: line 19
Insert: "(2) An off-highway vehicle may not be operated on or
 across a highway that is part of the federal-aid interstate
 system."

EXHIBIT Y

DATE 3-26-93

HB 679

Amendments to House Bill No. 679
First Reading Copy (WHITE)

Requested by Representative Clark For the Committee on Highways

Prepared by Valencia Lane March 22, 1993

1. Page 1, line 21.
Following: "state"

Insert: "that qualify as maintenance level 3 or greater in the United States forest service handbook"

2. Page 2, lines 13 and 14.

Strike: lines 13 and 14 in their entirety

Renumber: subsequent subsection

3. Page 2, line 18.
Following: "roads --"
Insert: "enforcement --"

4. Page 2, line 18.

Following: "exceptions."

Insert: "(1) Except as provided in subsection (2), U.S. bureau of land management roads in the state that qualify as collector roads in the U.S. bureau of land management manual, whether or not they meet the definition of a public highway by the laws of this state, are subject to the traffic laws of this state, and the Montana highway patrol and county sheriffs of this state have jurisdiction to investigate accidents and enforce the Montana traffic laws on those roads."

Renumber: subsequent subsections

5. Page 2, lines 24 and 25.

Following: "by the" on line 24 Strike: remainder of line 24 through "supervisor" on line 25

Insert: "authorized officer"

6. Page 3, lines 6 and 7.

Strike: lines 6 and 7 in their entirety

7. Page 3, line 11.

Following: "roads."

Insert: "(1)"

Strike: "An"

Insert: "Except as provided in subsection (2), an"

8. Page 3, line 20. Following: line 19

9. Page 3, line 21.
Following: "responsibilities"
Insert: " -- unlicensed operators"

10. Page 4. Following: line 23

Insert: "(5) An unlicensed operator who has successfully completed the off-highway vehicle safety education training program offered by the department of fish, wildlife, and parks may operate an off-highway vehicle on a maintenance level 3 or greater forest service road under the direct supervision of a licensed adult."

EXHIBIT 10 DATE 3-26-93 SB 416

Amendments to Senate Bill No. 416 Third Reading Copy

Requested by Representative Whalen For the Committee on Highways and Transportation

Prepared by Connie Erickson March 29, 1993

1. Title, line 7. Strike: "\$200,000" Insert: "\$500,000"

2. Page 2, line 12.
Strike: "\$200,000"
Insert: "\$500,000"

EXHIBIT_	11
DATE 3	-26-93
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DATE 3-26-93
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HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HB 679

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES VISITOR'S REGISTER

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES VISITOR'S REGISTER

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