

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
83R2921 JAM-D

S.B. 487
By: Davis
Transportation
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Annually, \$646 billion is being spent nationwide on outdoor recreation. In Texas alone, consumers spend \$28.7 billion a year, including \$1.6 billion specifically for off-road motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle (ATV), and recreational off-highway vehicle (ROV) use. Over the last several years, the sale of saddle-seat ATVs and ROVs has declined across the country while the sale of side-by-side seat vehicles has increased. In reaction to consumer demand, trail-accessible side-by-side vehicles have been introduced. Even though these vehicles are similar in size to traditional straddle-seat ATVs, they are not currently allowed to be ridden on certain ATV trails in Texas due to the seating configuration.

S.B. 487 updates Texas's definitions for ATVs and ROVs in an effort to encompass the industry's current and future product offerings and permit the latest vehicles to be legally ridden on all ATV trails. This is part of an effort to update definitions across the country to ensure consistency among state definitions, thus allowing manufacturers to react more quickly to consumer demand and ensure a consistent customer experience. Additionally, the bill inserts a 50-inch width limit in the ATV definition and a 65-inch width limit in the ROV definition, which are industry standards.

S.B. 487 updates off-road utility vehicle definitions within state statute to provide consumers with the chance to enjoy riding on state trails and public land using the vehicles that best suit their needs.

As proposed, S.B. 487 amends current law relating to all-terrain vehicles and recreational off-highway vehicles.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 502.001(1) and (37), Transportation Code, as follows:

(1) Redefines "all-terrain vehicle" to mean a motor vehicle that meets certain criteria, including being equipped with a seat or seats, rather than a saddle, for certain persons, and being not more than 50 inches wide. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(37) Redefines "recreational off-highway vehicle" to mean a motor vehicle that meets certain criteria, including being equipped with a seat or seats, rather than a non-straddle seat, for certain persons, and being not more than 65 inches wide. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 663.001(1), Transportation Code, to make conforming changes.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2013.