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On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3155

I would like to emphasize a few key reasons why I believe this change would significantly benefit not only those who use off-road vehicles but also the broader community.

1. Expanding Mobility for Rural Areas

As someone who lives in a rural area, I can attest to the challenges of limited access to public transportation and the difficulty in navigating poorly maintained roads. Off-road vehicles are often the most reliable mode of transportation, especially in regions where traditional cars cannot easily navigate, or where the nearest town is miles away. Allowing these vehicles to access public roads would make it easier for residents to meet their basic needs, including travel to work, school, healthcare facilities, and grocery stores.

2. Supporting Emergency Services

Another critical aspect is the potential for off-road vehicles to assist in emergency situations. Whether it's a first responder reaching an isolated area or a citizen needing help, off-road vehicles have proven to be vital in navigating tough terrain. By allowing these vehicles to operate on public roads, we improve their ability to respond quickly when emergencies arise, saving both time and lives.

3. Economic and Recreational Benefits

Off-road vehicles are an integral part of the local economy in many areas. Whether it's through off-road tourism, recreational riding, or supporting local businesses that cater to off-road enthusiasts, allowing these vehicles to travel on public roads will directly benefit the community. Local shops, fuel stations, and repair businesses will see an increase in traffic, bringing in revenue and creating jobs. Additionally, expanding the routes available for off-road enthusiasts promotes healthy outdoor activities and helps connect individuals with nature.

4. Ensuring Safety and Regulation

I recognize that there are concerns about safety and environmental impact, and I agree that these need to be addressed thoroughly. However, I believe that with the right regulations in place, we can ensure that off-road vehicles are used responsibly and safely. This could include vehicle modifications such as lighting, proper tires, and emissions controls, as well as requiring special licenses or safety courses for drivers. In addition, setting aside specific routes or designated lanes for off-road vehicles would help minimize conflict with traditional road traffic and reduce risks.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the benefits of allowing off-road vehicles on public roads, when properly regulated, far outweigh the potential drawbacks. It would increase mobility, provide access to emergency services, boost the local economy, and promote recreation. With the right planning, we can ensure that the integration of these vehicles into our road systems is safe and responsible.

I urge you to consider these points as you move forward with this proposal and look forward to seeing the positive changes that will come from it.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide further information if needed.