



February 10, 2025

Joint Committee On Transportation
900 Court St NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Counties oppose House Bill 3155, ATV highway access, concerns over local control, traffic safety, and community livability

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Co-Vice-Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis, Members of the Joint Committee On Transportation,

The Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors (OACES), an affiliate of the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC), represents Oregon's 36 county public works agencies and road departments across the state. County roads are a critical component of Oregon's integrated road system and are responsible for over 60% of Oregon's non-federal road network, over 32,000 total miles, and 3,400 bridges.

OACES and AOC oppose House Bill 3155 as written, which removes local control of a county governing body's existing authority to designate All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) use on county roads. A county's board of commissioners can allow ATVs on their county roads through an ordinance, and by taking on the associated safety liability risks. Before allowing ATV use, a county engineer, sheriff's office, and legal counsel carefully consider all traffic safety issues that might arise, including, traffic and vehicular patterns, speed limits, typical use, the nature and construction of the road, and visibility. Robust public process and community engagement help to inform the county's decision before designating ATV access on a county road.

This careful consideration of a local road's context and ATV use should be kept local. Many counties across Oregon have opened up all or portions of their roads for ATV use. Whether it's in Eastern Oregon supporting ATV tourist destinations and surrounding ATV trails, like Baker County and the Town of Sumpter, or partial road ATV access to the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area on the coast, in Douglas and Coos counties—these designations can have a significant economic benefit to local farmers, ranchers, hunters, and recreational users alike. Many county roads are not open to ATV use because of livability or safety issues. In other more residential areas or higher-speed paved county highways, local communities need to be able to safeguard local preferences for livability and safety. These county road access use decisions are best made by local communities, at the local level, and by the local road authority experts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide county concerns and opposition regarding HB 3155. County road departments play a key role in managing traffic safety and are grateful to be included in the discussion. We hope to have the opportunity with the bill sponsors and the committee for more in-depth conversations if HB 3155 moves forward this session.

Sincerely,

Brian Worley
County Road Program Director, Association of Oregon Counties
Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors

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