

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5166

As of January 27, 2011

Title: An act relating to allowing off-road vehicles on public highways in certain areas.

Brief Description: Allowing off-road vehicles on public highways in certain areas.

Sponsors: Senators Schoesler, King, Hatfield, Morton, Honeyford, Hewitt and Roach.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/26/11.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Katherine Taylor (786-7434)

Background: Currently, any city, county, other political subdivision of this state, or any state agency, may regulate the operation of non-highway vehicles on public lands, waters, and other properties under its jurisdiction; and on streets, roads, or highways within its boundaries by adopting regulations or ordinances, provided such regulations are not less stringent than the provisions of current law.

Further, a legislative body of a city with a population of less than 3000 persons, may by ordinance, designate a street or highway within its boundaries to be suitable for use by off-road vehicles. Additionally, the legislative body of a county may, by ordinance, designate a road or highway within its boundaries to be suitable for use by off-road vehicles if the road or highway is a direct connection between a city with a population of less than 3000 persons and an off-road vehicle recreation facility.

Summary of Bill: The legislative body of a county with a population of no more than 5000 persons may designate by ordinance a street, road, or highway within its boundaries to be suitable for use by off-road vehicles.

Additionally, the legislative body of a county with a population of more than 5000 persons may designate by ordinance a road or highway within its boundaries to be suitable for use by off-road vehicles if the road or highway is a direct connection between a city with a population of fewer than 3000 persons and an off-road vehicle recreation facility.

Appropriation: None.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Supports active off-road vehicle communities, small towns, and off-road vehicle dealerships. Licensing off-road vehicles helps with enforcement.

CON: Off-road vehicle riders are irresponsible. Wilderness will be damaged, wildlife will be hurt, people are injured when riding all-terrain vehicles; hunters and bird watchers are negatively impacted. This will increase illegal trespass, and be hard for law enforcement to enforce.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Schoesler prime sponsor; Pat Halstead, WA State Motorsports Dealers Assoc., NW Motor Assoc.

CON: Seth Cool, Conservation NW; Greg Bufundo, Trout Unlimited.