



MINUTES

ATVs and ORVs on Highways Interim Study Committee

Tuesday, December 30, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Dan Zumbach, Co-chairperson
Senator Thomas Townsend
Senator Scott Webster

Representative Megan Jones, Co-chairperson
Representative Daniel Gosa
Representative Brent Siegrist

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I. Procedural Business

Call to Order and Adjournment. The All-Terrain Vehicles and Off-Road Utility Vehicles on Highways Interim Study Committee was called to order by temporary Co-chairperson Zumbach at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 30, 2025, in Room 116 of the State Capitol, Des Moines. The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Election of Permanent Co-chairpersons. Members of the committee elected temporary Co-chairpersons Zumbach and Jones as permanent Co-chairpersons.

Adoption of rules. Members of the committee unanimously adopted the proposed rules.

Opening remarks. Co-chairperson Jones made brief introductory comments.

Charge. The committee is required to examine policy matters and recommend statutory changes relating to the operation of all-terrain vehicles and off-road utility vehicles on highways, including registration and fees for all-terrain vehicles and off-road utility vehicles to be operated on a highway, consolidating Code provisions that regulate the operation of all-terrain vehicles and off-road utility vehicles. The committee shall submit a report to the general assembly by January 12, 2026. A proposed bill by the interim study committee may be filed in lieu of submitting a final report.

II. Presentations

Mr. Larry Grant, State Safety Planner, Traffic and Safety Bureau, presented on behalf of the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT). Mr. Grant presented information on the history of total fatalities related to the operation of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and off-road utility vehicles (ORVs) on highways, and provided a fatality report to the committee.

Lieutenant Wade Major, Iowa State Patrol, presented on behalf of the Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS). Lieutenant Major noted that the laws and regulations governing the use of ATVs and ORVs on highways have led to some confusion, particularly concerning the permissible times for operating an ATV or ORV, exceptions granted for ATVs and ORVs used for agricultural production, required equipment, slow moving vehicle signs, speed limits, ATV and ORV manual recommendations, and seatbelt use. Lieutenant Major also explained that provisions related to ATV and ORV use are currently contained in Iowa Code sections 321.234A and 321.10, and that consolidating all provisions relating to on-highway operation in Iowa Code section 321.234A would help improve general understanding of the regulations.

Ms. Jessica Flatt, Off-Highway Vehicles Program Manager, and Mr. Craig Cutts, Law Enforcement Bureau Chief, presented on behalf of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Ms. Flatt explained that DNR is tasked with the oversight of a variety of ATV and ORV related issues, including registering ATVs and ORVs that are operated on public property, managing the Special All-Terrain Vehicle Fund, producing educational materials and safety courses, and administering the grant program to maintain designated off-highway vehicles (OHV) areas in the state.

III. Committee Discussion

Co-chairperson Jones asked Lieutenant Major for clarification regarding car seat requirements for children in ATVs and ORVs. Lieutenant Major explained that a 2024 owner's manual for an ORV recommended that children do not ride in an ATV or ORV with a car seat or child restraint device. Co-chairperson Jones asked whether the owner's manual recommended that children not ride in the



ORV. Lieutenant Major responded that the owner's manual did not include a recommendation, but noted that Iowa law does not regulate the use of a child restraint device with respect to ATVs or ORVs, and does not specify whether a child is allowed or prohibited from riding in an ATV or ORV.

Senator Webster asked how many fatalities occurred when a person was not operating but was around an ATV or ORV in the past three years. Mr. Grant responded that he would provide that information at a later date.

Senator Webster asked how DNR's grant program was created. Ms. Flatt responded that the program began when DNR began registering ATVs and ORVs, and explained that the registration fees are used by DNR to support the grant program to fund OHV parks. Ms. Flatt noted that registering and titling ATVs and ORVs helps with theft prevention and creates a paper trail of ownership for a vehicle. Senator Webster asked who received the grants. Ms. Flatt responded that DNR partners with OHV parks, including city, county, or non-profit partners to create OHV parks. Senator Webster asked whether OHV parks are considered local or state expenditures. Ms. Flatt responded that the use of funds are considered local program funds.

Senator Webster asked whether the DNR was actively pulling over individuals and enforcing ATV and ORV laws on public highways. Mr. Cutts responded that the primary role of DNR was to complete inspections, and DNR was not currently enforcing laws on public highways. Senator Webster asked whether the DNR was the proper enforcer of the ATV and ORV laws. Mr. Cutts responded that the primary enforcer would be cities and counties, as well as DPS. Ms. Flatt noted that DNR did have officers assigned to provide law enforcement at designated riding areas, including performing license and registration checks.

Co-chairperson Jones asked about the registration process. Ms. Flatt responded that an ATV or ORV must be registered at the county recorder's office and must provide proof of ownership and submit any other required forms to the county recorder.

Mr. Grant noted that the crash data provided by the DOT represented only the ATV and ORV crash data on public highways, and did not include data on crashes that occurred off highways, including on private property. Mr. Grant explained that DNR received data regarding crashes that occur off highways, and that serious injury crashes do occur on private property that aren't reflected in the DOT's statistics.

Co-chairperson Zumbach made closing comments.

IV. Recommendations

The committee took no formal action relating to policy recommendations.

V. Materials Filed with the Legislative Service Agency

Materials were distributed at or in connection with the meeting and are filed with the Legislative Services Agency. The materials may be accessed from the "Committee Documents" link on the committee's Internet site accessible at the following address:

www.legis.iowa.gov/committees/meetings/documents?committee=42784&ga=ALL