



TONY KURTZ

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 50th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Assembly Bill 760
Wednesday, February 2, 2022
Assembly Committee on Forestry, Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Thank you Chairman Mursau and committee members for hearing Assembly Bill 760 (AB 760) today. I apologize for not being able to be in attendance today, but I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony.

In 2011, the Legislature established a method for regulating the use of utility terrain vehicles (UTVs). In general, the law applied the same regulations to UTVs as it did to all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). It was understood that the purpose of these two vehicles was very similar but a legal distinction was made between the two. Likely as a result, the 2011 law created a subsection relating to UTV vehicle projects and fees separate from the subsection relating to ATV vehicle projects and fees.

In the decade that followed, the popularity of recreational vehicles has risen dramatically. ATV registrations in Wisconsin steadily increased each year, and UTV registrations grew from just 27 in 2011 to over 113,000 in 2020. Also, according to the DNR, most of the ATV trails in the state are also open to UTVs.

AB 760 simplifies the Chapter 20 schedule by combining duplicative line-items to consolidate the statutes that relate to both ATV and UTV funding. This bill does not cost any money and it does not change any internal accounting methods used at the Department of Natural resources.

It is important to make sure our state's statutory language is cleaned up and reflects current day practices and is as easy to read and understand as possible. This bill does just that.

I thank Senator Marklein for co-authoring this legislation with me and I would be happy to meet and answer any questions you may have at a later date.



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

February 2, 2022

Assembly Committee on Forestry, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Testimony on Assembly Bill 760

Thank you Chairman Mursau and committee members for hearing Assembly Bill (AB) 760, which simplifies the Chapter 20 appropriation schedule by combining a number of duplicative line-items. This action will consolidate the statutes and provide for easier accounting. Thank you Representative Tusler, Representative Moses, and Representative Milroy for co-sponsoring this bipartisan legislation.

The Chapter 20 appropriation schedule has hundreds of line-items in it. The amounts listed in the appropriation schedule form the foundation of state spending. A common goal has been to clean-up the statutes as much as possible.

After reading Legislative Fiscal Bureau (LFB) Budget Paper #456 "ATV and UTV Funding", I learned that a variety of All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) and Utility-Terrain Vehicle (UTV) appropriations could easily be combined. The Chapter 20 line items for ATV and UTV spending are separate and, sometimes, in completely different places. This is the case even though money is drawn from the same account and used for the same projects. In some cases, the statutes are even worded exactly the same.

AB 760 simplifies the Chapter 20 schedule by combining duplicative line-items to consolidate the statutes and provide for easier accounting of ATV and UTV spending.

This bill would combine five separate ATV and UTV line items that are used for the same purposes.

1. General Program Operations – State ATV/UTV Projects
2. Recreation Aids – ATV/UTV Project Aids
3. Recreation Aids – ATV/UTV Project Aids; Gas Tax Payment
4. Transfer to the Conservation Fund; ATV/UTV Formula
5. ATV and UTV Registration Handling Fees

By nature of the combination, this bill would clarify a 2019 Wisconsin Act 183 provision that Project Aids given to nonprofit organizations for the production of maps, communications equipment, and signage can be used for ATV and UTV projects.

This bill has a net fiscal effect of \$0, does not change any distributions from the ATV/UTV Account, and does not impact the internal accounting at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Senate Bill (SB) 727, the companion legislation to AB 760, was recommended for passage by the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy 5-0 on January 19, 2022. SB 727 passed the full Senate unanimously (32-0) on January 25, 2022.

AB 760 is supported by the Wisconsin ATV/UTV Association. Thank you again to the committee for hearing this proposal, and your timely action on the bill.



Assembly Committee on Forestry, Parks and Outdoor Recreation

2021 Assembly Bill 760

Combining Appropriation for All-Terrain Vehicle and Utility Terrain Vehicle Projects and Making an Appropriation February 2, 2022

Good morning Chair Mursau and members of the Committee. My name is Cathy Burrow, and I am the Environment & Natural Resources Grants Section Chief in the Bureau of Community Financial Assistance with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. There are over 20 grant programs administered in my section including the motorized recreation grants. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, for informational purposes, on Assembly Bill 760 (AB 760).

Combining ATV and UTV Appropriations

AB 760 would consolidate six appropriations into three and repeal an obsolete and unused appropriation. The appropriations for state all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and utility terrain vehicle (UTV) projects would be combined into one appropriation. The ATV and UTV gas tax appropriations would be combined into one appropriation, as would the ATV and UTV registration fee appropriations. These changes would simplify the financial management of the program and there would be no visible impact to the motorized recreation community.

The ATV and UTV gas tax and registration fee appropriations provide the trail aids that my section administers. In practice, we already manage these four existing appropriations collectively as one program. This bill would change the financial side of the program to match the management style of the program, simplifying the administration overall.

The consolidation of these appropriations would not affect the grant programs. The overall funding is not altered by this bill, nor are any eligibility requirements for those using the trail aids programs. The administrative work needed from finance staff would occur on a one-time basis and would be minimal.

On behalf of the Department of Natural Resources, thank you for your time today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.