



JERRY PETROWSKI

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 506

September 7, 2021

Good afternoon, members of the committee, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today on Senate Bill 506.

As you may know, local governments may designate roads under its jurisdiction as ATV routes, allowing ATVs and UTVs to travel upon the roadway much like ordinary vehicles. Such routes can be used to help connect separate sections of ATV trails, and allow convenient access to fuel, lodging and dining within the municipality.

In general, ATV and UTV traffic along the ATV route is subject to the same posted speed limit applicable to regular vehicular traffic on the roadway. Though many local governments have expressed interest in posting a lower speed limit that applies only to ATV / UTV traffic on the route, current law is unclear whether they have the authority to do so.

This bill would grant local authorities the ability to post a lower speed limit for ATV and UTV traffic on designated routes. This is a common sense change that will give local governments more flexibility to ensure the safety of both ATV / UTV riders and the general public on local roads.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

29TH SENATE DISTRICT



Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government

2021 Senate Bill 506

Authorizing posting of speed limits applicable to all-terrain vehicles and utility terrain vehicles

September 7, 2021

Good afternoon Chair Petrowski and members of the Committee. My name is Martin Stone, Off-Highway Vehicle Administrator with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, for informational purposes, on Senate Bill 506 (SB 506), related to authorizing posting of speed limits applicable to all-terrain vehicles and utility terrain vehicles.

Speed limit restrictions were enacted in March 2020 for all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility terrain vehicles (UTVs) when operated on the roadway. When operating on a roadway, operators of ATVs and UTVs are required to comply with the “applicable speed limit.” Questions have been raised as to whether the applicable speed limit is the posted limit for motor vehicles, or a lower posted limit marked specifically to apply to ATVs and UTVs.

SB 506 clearly defines that local governments may, by ordinance, post speed limits applicable only to ATVs and UTVs that are lower than the posted speed limit for motor vehicles on roadway routes. This change would provide added clarity to local governments and enforcement authorities working to ensure roadway ATV and UTV speed compliance.

ATV roadway route signing has been problematic in some areas of the state and has posed challenges for some local governments considering posting ATV route signage. It’s not uncommon to see more than one design, size, or color of ATV route or speed limit signage due to a lack of clear language specifying the type of ATV speed limit signage that shall be used. The legislature may wish to consider adding additional language to statute to further clarify the type of signage that should be used to help eliminate non-standard regulatory signing and achieve greater consistency and clarity for local governments and ATV and UTV riders statewide.

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