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# HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 51<sup>ST</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**February 12, 2014**

**Assembly Bill 743 Testimony**

Thank you to Chairman Ott and all the committee members on the Assembly Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage Committee for allowing me to testify in favor of Assembly Bill 743, which makes changes to the laws that govern the operation of all-terrain vehicles and utility terrain vehicles, or ATVs and UTVs, on highway bridges.

Current law allows for an individual to operate an ATV or UTV vehicle on a state highway in limited situations. On bridges that are closed to ATV/UTV traffic, state law requires the rider to dismount the ATV or UTV and use a vehicle to haul it across the bridge. Some ATV/UTV riders choose to ignore this law and continue to use their ATV/UTV across the bridge because their vehicles and trailers are miles away at the starting location of their ride. Often times, the riders are attempting to reach fueling stations, restaurants, and lodging on the other side of the bridge. If riders are choosing to ignore this law, it can be an unsafe situation for the rider or anyone crossing the bridge in a vehicle.

This bill would require both the county and the municipality to approve ATV or UTV access on bridges under 1,000 feet. This is important to maintain local control surrounding this issue. The local police chiefs and sheriffs know best when it comes to safety on these types of vehicles.

The driver of the ATV or UTV must stay as far to the right of the roadway or shoulder as possible, stop the vehicle prior to the crossing, and yield the right-of-way to other vehicles, and pedestrians. We have also submitted a friendly amendment from the Department of Transportation which adds that the rider must exit the bridge as quickly and as safely as possible.

Both the county and the municipality would submit a report to the state traffic patrol, which has jurisdiction on these bridges.

I would be happy to take any questions from committee members at this time.



## 2013 ASSEMBLY BILL 743

### OPERATION OF ATVs AND UTVs ON HIGHWAY BRIDGES

Testimony by: Gary Eddy - ATV and Snowmobile Education Administrator, Dept. of Natural Resources  
Appearing for Information Only

#### Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage

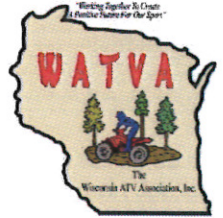
February 12, 2014 10:31 AM

Room: 417 North (GAR Hall)

Good morning Chair Ott, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on Assembly Bill 743. Under current law, a person may legally operate an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) or utility terrain vehicle (UTV) on the roadway portion of a highway bridge in certain situations, unless the roadway is officially closed to ATV or UTV traffic. This bill would allow a person to operate an ATV or UTV on the roadway or shoulder of a highway for the purpose of crossing a bridge if the bridge is within the territorial boundaries of a county or municipality and the county or municipality has enacted an ordinance allowing crossing of the bridge and the bridge is 1,000 feet in length or less. All such ordinances must be filed with the Department of Natural Resources and any law enforcement agencies having jurisdiction over any of the highways to which the ordinance applies. Crossings must be performed in the most direct manner practicable and at a place where no obstruction prevents a quick and safe crossing. Operators must stay as far to the right of the roadway or shoulder as practicable, operators must stop their vehicle prior to crossing and must yield the right-of-way to other vehicles, pedestrians, and electric personal assistive mobility devices using the roadway or shoulder.

This concludes my written testimony. I would be happy to try and answer any questions you might have.

02/12/14 - Public Hearing  
Written testimony of Randy Harden, president of the  
Wisconsin ATV UTV Association (WATVA)



**Assembly Committee on Natural Resources & Sporting Heritage  
Chair - Representative Al Ott**

*Representatives Kleefisch, Williams, Mursau, Nerison, Petryk, Steineke, Born, Swearingen,  
Skowronski, Milroy, Hebl, Clark, Danou, Hesselbein, & Shankland*

***AB 743 - Relating to the operation of ATVs & UTVs on highways bridges***

To: Chairman Ott and all committee members

Thank you for taking this written testimony related to AB 743.

Under current state law, the language is unclear as to when a bridge is officially closed (or open) to ATV / UTV traffic. This bill makes clear what procedure and ordinances are required and under what conditions ATV & UTV traffic can be allowed to cross certain bridges.

Our organization greatly appreciates positive ATV legislation that helps grow our industry and sport here in Wisconsin. By passing this kind of legislation, it allows the local municipalities within the territorial boundaries of the bridge to work with the county to decide if ATV traffic should be allowed.