

# ANDRÉ JACQUE

STATE SENATOR • 1<sup>ST</sup> SENATE DISTRICT

Phone: (608) 266-3312

Fax: (608) 282-3541

Sen.Jacque@legis.wi.gov

State Capitol - P.O. Box 7882

Madison, WI 53707-7882

*Testimony before the Senate Committee on Transportation, Veterans and Military Affairs  
State Senator André Jacque  
September 25, 2019*

Chairman Petrowski and Committee Members,

Thank you for holding this hearing on Senate Bill 86, relating to registration and operation of vehicles defined as autocycles. I am happy to join Rep. Knodl in bringing forward this legislation.

A relatively new vehicle known as the autocycle has been growing more popular in Wisconsin and other states since 2014. In Wisconsin and across the country, autocycles are registered as motorcycles and drivers need a motorcycle endorsement to legally drive them on local roads.

However, these autocycles do not meet the actual definition of a motorcycle in Wisconsin with their use of a steering wheel, seatbelts and gas and brake pedals. These characteristics are more indicative of a car or truck and, as a result, autocycles should not be classified and registered as a motorcycle. In addition, autocycles are heavier than the weight range listed for motorcycles in state statutes.

Senate Bill 86 clarifies the definition of autocycles so that Wisconsin can be in a better position to address future technologies and the impact these vehicles will have on state roads. Wisconsin will also be poised to realize the following benefits by adopting a separate classification for autocycles:

- Opening up the market to all motorists with a regular driver's license instead of the current motorcycle endorsement would allow for more sales, thus increasing collected sales taxes. Due to the significant weight of autocycles, a higher registration fee would also be collected to address their impact on roads.
- Expanding the pool of potential consumers should improve sales for dealers as well as help Wisconsin manufacturing plants that support the construction of autocycles.
- Freeing up Department of Transportation staff time since the agency is currently pulling out crash statistics manually to evaluate the effect of autocycles.
- Eliminating confusion on how to follow the law when operating autocycles.

Senate Bill 86 is strongly supported by ABATE of Wisconsin.

Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 86.



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# DAN KNODL

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 24<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## **Senate Bill 86**

Public Testimony

Senate Committee on Transportation

September 25, 2019

Thank you, Chairman Petrowski and members of the committee for holding this hearing on Senate Bill 86.

This proposal would create a new vehicle class in Wisconsin known as an autocycle. These vehicles have specific characteristics including the use of a steering wheel, seatbelts and gas and brake pedals. Accompanying this new class of vehicle will be a new registration fee of \$45 annually, compared with \$75 annually for cars and \$23 biennially for motorcycles.

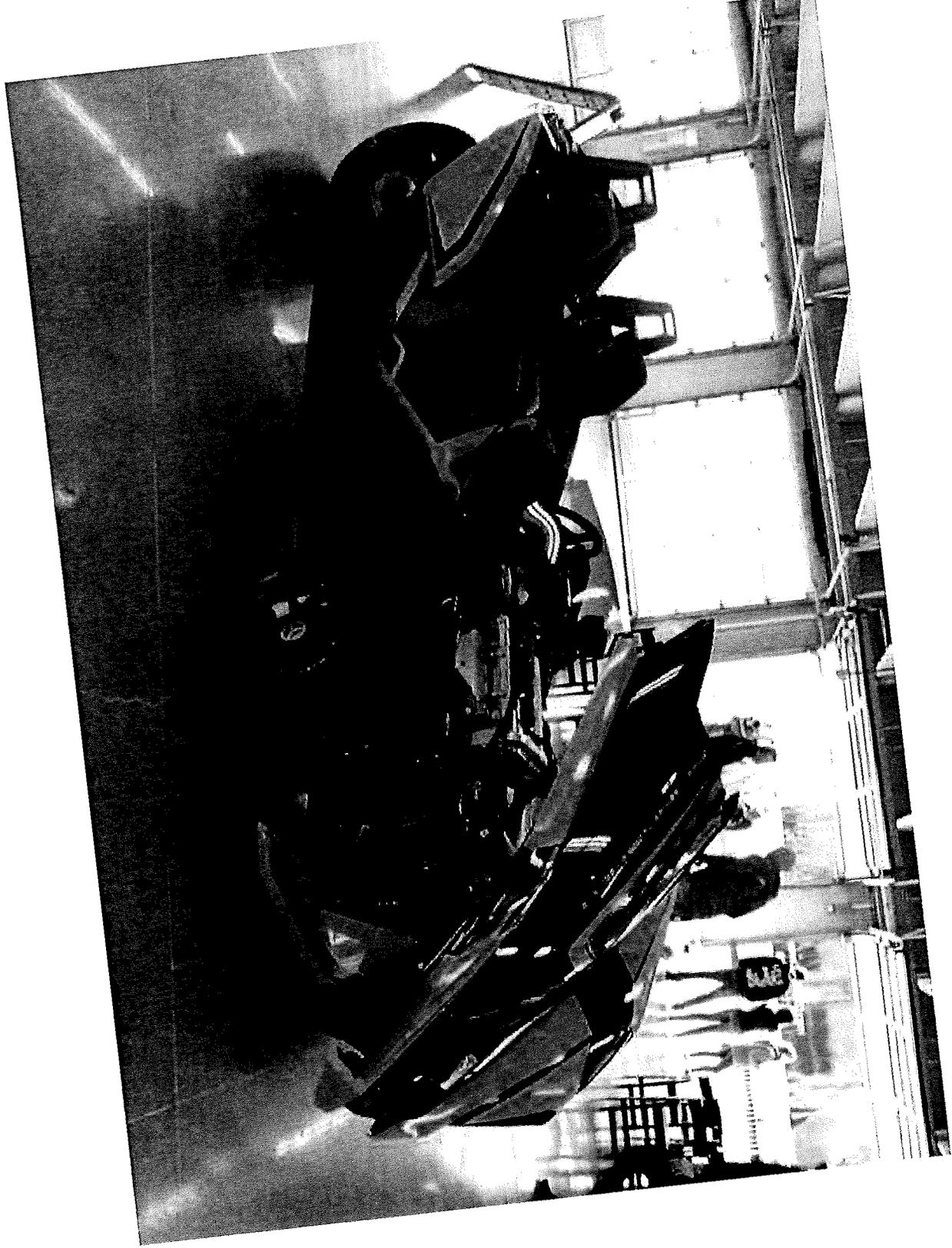
Individuals are currently required to obtain a motorcycle endorsement on their driver's license to drive these vehicles. Under the bill, this requirement would be removed allowing any licensed driver in the state the option to drive the newly termed autocycle. This would significantly increase the driver base for these vehicles and would likely increase the sales in the state as well.

The legislation would also have an impact on crash statistics. Since the autocycle is currently classified as a motorcycle, the latter's crash statistics are being skewed by the inclusion of these autocycle vehicles.

Creation of this new vehicle class would have additional benefits in the revenue department as well. We could experience an increase in sales tax collected from the additional sales with the expanded customer base as well as the increase in registration fees. Dealers of these vehicles would welcome this increased customer base as the requirement of a motorcycle endorsement would no longer be necessary.

This is a common-sense bill that reflects a good-faith compromise between stakeholders. I believe you will hear shortly from two of the main stakeholders and supporters; Polaris and ABATE of Wisconsin.

Thank you for your time and attention to this bill and I am happy to take any questions you may have at this time.



**Wisconsin Senate Committee on Transportation, Veteran's & Military Affairs**

Wednesday, September 25, 2019 – 9:31am

State Capitol – 330 Southwest

**Testimony of Mr. J.R. Burke, Director, State Government Affairs, Polaris Industries**

**SB 86 - Relating to: registration and operation of vehicles defined as autocycles.**

Chair Petrowski, Vice-Chair Marklein and members of the committee, my name is J.R. Burke, Director, State Government Affairs, with Polaris Industries.

It is my pleasure to speak today in favor of SB 86 and its proposed amendments by Senator Jacque, which together would create a new motor vehicle category called autocycle. This has been a long time in the making.

Under Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and current Wisconsin statute, vehicles in this proposed category are classified as motorcycles. However, this style of motorcycle has automotive-like features including two front wheels, a steering wheel, pedals at the floor for acceleration, braking and clutching, and bucket-style seats.

Further, they come with automotive-style lighting features and three-point safety harnesses as occupants sit in it much like a passenger car.

Recognizing these unique features, in 2013, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, AAMVA, developed the autocycle concept, recommending that states codify the three-wheeled vehicle category as a sub-classification of vehicles that are defined federally as motorcycles. Since then, forty-seven states have adopted an autocycle definition in one form or another.

Since its introduction in 2014, independent small business dealers in Wisconsin have been retailing Slingshot, and their customers have titled and registered them, as motorcycles. This legislation would provide that, going forward, these products fall under the newly-created autocycle definition and will be registered accordingly.

AAMVA further recommended that autocycles be operated under a Class D license and that distinguishing them from both traditional two- and three-wheeled motorcycles and automobiles would aid law enforcement in accurate incident reporting. This bill would also codify AAMVA's autocycle operator licensing recommendation.

Unfortunately, under today's requirement that one must hold a valid motorcycle endorsement to operate a Slingshot, customers without this endorsement are unable to even test drive one. Current motorcycle skills test, however, do not accommodate autocycles, nor are the skills tested for required to safely operate an autocycle given its three-wheel stance. Providing for operation under a Class D license, more Wisconsin residents will have the opportunity to safely enjoy autocycles.

For these reasons, we speak in favor of SB 86 and respectfully request that the committee support this legislation with a DO PASS recommendation. Thank you. I am happy to answer any questions.

