



Please Vote YES on HB/SB 17-____

Local Government Safety Zone Creation for Recreational Off-Highway Vehicles

Sponsors:

The recreational use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs) is an important tourism amenity in Colorado. A wide number of our counties – primarily on the Western Slope and in the San Luis Valley - have tourism economies that are dependent upon attracting OHV riders to their communities. Many of these counties have spent years working on programs and designating road networks that attract thousands of riders from across the country each year. The terrain in these counties varies greatly, from the mountainous jeep roads in Southwest Colorado to gentler, more family-friendly terrain in Northwest Colorado.

Colorado Counties, Inc. has been engaged in a stakeholder process for the past several years to work on the safe use of OHVs on designated county roads throughout the state. This stakeholder process included county commissioners, county sheriffs, the Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition, Colorado State Patrol, the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, Children's Hospital, CML, Club 20, AGNC and a number of environmental groups.

Local governments currently have the power to declare roads within their jurisdictions open or closed to OHVs, and the ability to adopt an ordinance to require a driver's license and/or liability insurance for operators on municipal streets or county roads. The bill makes clear that agricultural use of OHVs is **exempt** from local government ordinances. The bill is enabling in nature and respects local control and local decision-making regarding safe use of OHVs on our municipal streets and county roads. This bill allows for local governments to declare and sign portions of their roads open to recreational use of OHVs as a "OHV Safety Zone." Within such a designated safety zone, standard safety features such as working brakes, lights, operator eye protection, safe seating and child restraints, and helmets for youth apply to non-agricultural OHVs. Entrance and exit of OHV Safety Zones will be clearly signed. All OHV Safety Zones would have the same safety requirements for consistency across the state.

This is important to Counties because they coordinate and fund first response, search and rescue, life flight, and investigations when accidents arise. With the explosion of popularity of OHVs, especially in the unforgiving mountainous terrain in high alpine areas of Colorado, counties are finding it necessary to increase safety. If safety cannot be increased, some local roads may be in danger of closure to non-agricultural use of OHVs.

CCI asks for your YES vote on SB/HB-____

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