

**Transportation Committee
PUBLIC HEARING
Monday, February 14, 2011**

To: Senator Andrew Maynard, Co-Chairman
Representative Antonio Guerrero, Co-Chairman
Honorable Members of the Transportation Committee
Room 2300, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT

Re: **S.B. No. 811 AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR THE
UNAUTHORIZED USE OF ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES.**

As a member of the Peter's Rock Association in North Haven, CT, I have been involved not only as a board member and hiker, but as a volunteer as well. Many hours have been dedicated to building and marking trails and maintaining those trails for the enjoyment and safety of hikers. In addition to being a respite for hikers, the 220-acre park and open space is home to numerous species of wildlife and birds.

It is discouraging to see those trails destroyed by illegal use of all-terrain vehicles. ATVs have dug large ruts in the trails, sometimes several feet deep. These ruts are receptacles for rainwater and snow melt and prohibit safe trail walking. Many side trails have been made by these vehicles, often making it difficult for hikers unfamiliar with the trail system, to navigate through the park.

An early morning peaceful and uplifting hike to the summit this past fall was destroyed by the sound of several ATVs racing through the park. What had been a hike filled with the sounds of birds in the quiet woods disappeared. The park no longer belonged to the hiker or the wildlife and I was anxious to quickly make my way out of the park. ATVs have been known to speed by hikers. One encounter left me frozen in my tracks, as I could not detect which direction the sound of the ATV was coming from until it was upon me.

The hikers and volunteers are no match for the powerful ATVs, which are irresponsibly destroying plant life as well as trails. Often youthful riders drive these vehicles and it is only a matter of time before there is a dreadful accident. Please do your part as legislators and help us fulfill our promise of protecting and maintaining our park as well as other open spaces in our state. I encourage your support of Proposed S.B. No. 811.

Thank you,

Ann White Lombardi, Northford, CT
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