
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5183

AN ACT CONCERNING REGISTRATION OF ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES AND ESTABLISHING AN ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE DIVISION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

SUMMARY:

This bill creates an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Division within the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to (1) create and maintain ATV trails, (2) assist with ATV law enforcement, and (3) fund grants and activities for such things as safety and education classes for ATV operators.

The bill increases, from \$20 to \$40, the biennial ATV registration fee and requires half of the fee to be deposited into a new "all-terrain vehicle account" for use by the ATV Division. It also requires ATV owners to pay a \$5 "land purchase fee" at each registration. The division must use the proceeds to purchase land for ATV use.

State law already requires the DEEP commissioner to evaluate and make available some state land for ATV use. He must consider minimizing the ATVs' impact on the environment and consult with the state agency that owns the land before making it available to ATV operators (CGS § 23-26c).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2013

ATV REGISTRATION FEE

By law, Connecticut residents must register their ATVs with the motor vehicles commissioner if they plan to operate them on land they do not own or lease.

The bill increases, from \$20 to \$40, the biennial ATV registration fee and requires 50% of the fee to be deposited in an ATV account, which

the bill creates. The account, a separate nonlapsing account within the General Fund, must contain any money the law requires to be deposited in it.

For purposes of registration, an ATV is a self-propelled vehicle that is designed to travel over unimproved terrain and is unsuitable for use on public highways, as determined by the motor vehicles commissioner (CGS § 14-379). ATVs are defined more restrictively, however, for operation on state land. For this purpose, an ATV is a motorized vehicle unsuitable for operation on a highway that, among other things, (1) is no more than 50 inches wide, (2) weighs no more than 600 pounds, and (3) has an engine with a piston displacement of over 50 cubic centimeters (CGS § 23-26a).

It is unclear which definition would apply to ATVs using the land DEEP's ATV Division would purchase under the bill's provision.

ATV ACCOUNT PURPOSE

The bill requires the ATV Division to use the account funds for (1) creating and maintaining ATV trails, (2) assisting with ATV law enforcement, and (3) funding grants and related activities. It allows excess funds to be transferred to the General Fund's maintenance, repair, and improvement account to be used for maintaining, improving, repairing, or erecting structures on state park property, such as houses or buildings.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 32 Nay 2 (03/15/2013)