



April 8, 2013

Dear Representative:

We represent a national coalition of child safety advocates devoted to protecting the lives and well-being of our nation's children. We write to urge you to vote against Senate Bill 238, the so-called "Tykes on Bikes" bill, as we believe it will imperil small children by lifting the current legal restrictions on children under age 7 from operating motorcycles, ATVs or minibikes. Injuries are the leading cause of death to children in America, and most of these tragedies can be prevented through common sense actions and policies. Unfortunately, this bill is not one of those.

According to the most recent data from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), in 2011, ATVs killed at least 57 children younger than 16, accounting for 17 percent of fatalities. Forty seven percent of children killed were younger than 12 years old. Children under 16 suffered an estimated 29,000 serious injuries in 2011, an increase from 28,300 serious injuries in 2010. This represents 27 percent of all injuries. In 2010, serious injuries to children made up 25 percent of all injuries. It is important to note that there is always a lag with death reports documented by the CPSC. Therefore, the 2009 statistics should not be considered complete.

While portions of Senate Bill 238 may be well-intentioned, we urge you to oppose the bill because it will increase risks to children. The bill contains two flawed provisions that we oppose. The "rider fit" test for children under 16 is problematic because it ignores the developmental ability of children in determining whether a child can safely operate an ATV. While a child may be able to reach the steering wheel and brakes of a car, they are prohibited from driving until they reach a certain age. In the same way, being able to reach the handle bars and brakes of an ATV does not ensure that the operator has the developmental ability to safely operate the vehicle. In addition, we also have serious concerns about the bill because it would legalize motorcycle and ATV riding for six year olds, a potentially hazardous consequence that should not occur. Kindergartners and other young

children should not be operating ATVs and motorcycles that are too large and too complex for them to safely operate.

Our organizations have extensive data as well as deeply personal stories of loss due to injury and death from ATVs that we would be happy to share with you and your colleagues upon request. Please feel free to reach out to Sue Rabe at [suedelorabe@aol.com](mailto:suedelorabe@aol.com) if you have further questions about this matter.

Sincerely,

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Concerned Families for ATV Safety

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Cc: Members of the House Committee on Transportation and Economic Development