

**SUBJECT:** Exempting all-terrain vehicles from optional county fees

**COMMITTEE:** Transportation — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — Alexander, Siebert, Y. Davis, Edwards, Hamric, Hill, Noriega, Uher  
0 nays  
1 absent — Hawley

**WITNESSES:** None

**BACKGROUND:** Transportation Code, sec. 502.172, allows counties to add up to \$10 to the cost of registering a vehicle, with the money to be credited to county road and bridge funds. Transportation Code, sec. 502.173, allows counties with populations greater than 1.18 million to add between 50 cents and \$1.50 to the cost of registering a vehicle, to be credited to child-safety funds.

**DIGEST:** HB 523 would exempt all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) from optional vehicle registration fees imposed by counties that are credited to the county road and bridge fund or the child-safety fund.  
  
The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 523 would just formally recognize current practice. Very few ATVs are registered with counties, since no registration is required to operate an ATV on private land. All-terrain vehicles are designed for off-road driving. It is illegal to drive ATVs on public roads and bridges. All-terrain vehicle owners should not be subject to road and bridge fees, because their vehicles are never used on roads and bridges. The amount of optional fee money received by counties from ATV owners using public land is minimal, so exempting ATVs would cost the counties almost nothing.

OPPONENTS  
SAY:

There is no reason to exempt all-terrain vehicles from optional child-safety fund fees. The child-safety fee would have a negligible financial impact on ATV owners and should be maintained, especially since many children use ATVs on a regular basis.

HB 523 could result in revenue loss to some counties that may have an impact their budgets, even though the net loss may be small.