



Testimony in Support of SB 67

J.R. Burke, Director, State Government Affairs, Polaris Inc.

Senate Transportation Committee

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

Chairman Peterson, members of the committee:

My name is J.R. Burke, testifying on behalf of Polaris in support of Senate Bill 67, legislation that will update the all-terrain vehicle and recreational off-highway vehicle definitions. According to the federal Bureau of Economic Analysis, the U.S. outdoor economy accounts for \$887 billion in annual consumer spending and 7.6 million jobs. In Kansas, the outdoor economy accounts for nearly 40,000 jobs, \$1.5 billion in wages and \$3.3 billion of state GDP. And we are proud to report that powersports, including off-roading, is a top-5 contributor to these incredible numbers.

Many states across the country are in the midst of updating their off-road vehicle definitions as they seek to keep up with substantial innovation in this growing area of outdoor recreation, and this legislation puts Kansas on the forefront of this trend. With powersports beginning to embrace new technologies like electrification, new products pave the way to new customers, though the route must first be provided for through thoughtful legislation like SB 67.

While Polaris is a strong, vocal supporter of this legislation, please know that there are a number of Original Equipment Manufacturers in the off-road industry, along with their Kansas dealers, that will also benefit from your support of this legislation.

As Kansans travel to Missouri, which last year enacted the policies contained in this legislation, and Missourians to Kansas, consistent treatment of their ATVs and ROVs, and certainty that comes along with it, runs to everyone's benefit. This includes both the riders and those who are tasked with managing public lands, a substantial part of the public and private infrastructure that supports off-roading in Kansas.

While Polaris is an industry leader in off-road vehicle innovation, it is our Kansas-based dealer partners, 23 of them here in Kansas, each and every one, a small business, who bring the product to life for their customers. It is their business, their teams, and their customers who benefit most were this legislation to be enacted.

What is being proposed here is not new. As mentioned, Missouri has already enacted such policies, and so too have others. In 2021, Tennessee has also joined Kansas in proposing the very same policy. What we do here today is work to ensure that Kansas and its small business community that supports the outdoor economy are able to continue their growth without abatement and on a level playing field with their neighboring states.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your leadership and thoughtfulness in allowing a hearing on this important legislation. I respectfully ask for the committee's support on SB 67. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.