Below are safety facts that support the need for parts of HB 683. This bill will help to correct mistakes made when originally opening public roads to ATV traffic.

Usually, in opening any business or in most situations, **safety** is the number one concern. After all, without safety considerations, the potential of loss of life, bodily injury, and liability issues are almost certain.

Because of the rush to open public roads to ATV traffic in 2012, we feel that in some towns, both at the state and local levels, decisions were made against safety warnings. Let’s back up a bit and take a look at some news articles that show that safety warnings were ignored when opening some public roads in Coos County to ATV traffic in 2011, 2012, and 2013.

News and Sentinel article 9/21/2011: Connecticut Lakes Headwaters meeting. Department of Resources and Economic Development: (The plan to ignore safety was already in the works).

Johanna Lyons (at the time was with the Division of Parks and Rec.) stated, “We need to change the law before we can implement an ATV proposal**. From what we can decipher, the proposal that we have will fail against the criteria as outlined in the law. Only a change in the law would make it meet the criteria.”** (RSA 215 A: 42 and A:43.) (SO, they exempted some state roads from safety and environmental criteria with SB 250 in 2012 and opened roads.)

May 25, 2012: SB 250 was signed by the Governor.

Amended Analysis of the bill: “This bill adds specific **EXCEPTIONS to the evaluation criteria** for the establishment of ATV and trail bike trails on state lands and allows for OHRV operation on certain highways and trail crossings and connectors in Coos County.”

Also: “Trail connectors , as defined in RSA215-A:1, in Coos County shall be **exempt** from the provisions of RSA-A:42 and RSA215-A:43. (which are basically the safety and environmental criteria for opening state roads to OHRV traffic.)

Also: “The following sections of state highway shall be designated for OHRV use: **Back Lake Road in Pittsburg** , from the town dump to Route 3… (Other sections are also mentioned).

NHPR article July 31, 2013:

Carl Purvis,  **US Federal Safety Agency spokesman ,** has stated in a July 31, 2013 article, “The opening of some streets in **Coos County NH to ATV traffic** as part of the ‘Ride the Wilds’ network **is being greeted with dismay by the US Consumer Product Safety Commission.”**

Chris Gamache, the head of the state’s trails bureau, agreed that, **“ATVs are not designed to be used on pavement”** and that, “efforts were being made to pick short sections of road that would minimize the risks, and officials would be monitoring the issue. (The total length of Back Lake’s tarred road is 4.7 miles. Not short! No monitoring!!)

Website <http://nhpr.org/post/federal-safety-agency-atvs-pavement-coos-poor-idea> )

News and Sentinel article June 20, 2012: (at public hearing to open town portion of Back lake Road)

**“Law enforcement personnel also voiced concern about the proposal to open Back Lake Road, “I’m on the record as being opposed to this,” police chief Richard LaPoint said. “My stand is strictly based on safety.” NH Fish and Game Officer and Pittsburg resident Christopher Egan said, that while there haven’t been a lot of problems yet, an accident, “is going to happen.”** (The road was opened anyway.)