

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 581

BY REPRESENTATIVE ARMES

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 32:299.3, relative to off-road vehicles; to provide relative to "utility terrain  
3 vehicles" as "off-road vehicles"; to provide relative to safety equipment required for  
4 utility terrain vehicles; to provide for restrictions on speed and eligible roadways to  
5 be used by utility terrain vehicles; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 32:299.3 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

8 §299.3. Off-road vehicles; utility terrain vehicles

9 A.(1) For purposes of this Section, "utility terrain vehicle" shall mean any  
10 recreational motor vehicle designed for and capable of travel over designated roads,  
11 traveling on four or more tires with a maximum tire width of twenty-seven inches,  
12 a maximum wheel cleat or lug of three-fourths of an inch, a minimum width of fifty  
13 inches but not exceeding seventy-four inches, a minimum weight of at least seven  
14 hundred pounds but not exceeding two thousand pounds, and a minimum wheelbase  
15 of sixty-one inches but not exceeding one hundred ten inches. "Utility terrain  
16 vehicle" shall include those vehicles not equipped with a certification label as  
17 required by 49 CFR Part 567.4.

18 (2) "Utility terrain vehicle" does not include golf carts, vehicles specially  
19 designed to carry a disabled person, or vehicles otherwise registered under R.S.  
20 32:299. A "utility terrain vehicle" or "UTV" also means a recreational off-highway  
21 vehicle or ROV.

22 B. Notwithstanding the provisions in R.S. 32:299, the operation of a utility  
23 terrain vehicle upon the public roads or streets of this state is prohibited, except as  
24 follows:

1           (1) A utility terrain vehicle may be operated only upon a parish road that has  
2           been designated by a parish or a municipal street that has been designated by a  
3           municipality for use by a utility terrain vehicle. Upon a designation that a utility  
4           terrain vehicle may be operated on a designated road or street, the responsible  
5           governmental entity shall post appropriate signage indicating that the operation is  
6           authorized.

7           (2) A utility terrain vehicle may cross any divided highway, highway,  
8           roadway, or street with a posted speed limit in excess of thirty-five miles per hour  
9           at an intersection.

10           C. A utility terrain vehicle operated on any roadway or street shall be  
11           equipped with the minimum motor vehicle equipment appropriate for motor vehicle  
12           safety including, headlamps, front and rear turn signal lamps, tail lamps, stop lamps,  
13           reflex reflectors, including one on each side as far to the rear as practicable and one  
14           red reflector on the rear of the vehicle, an exterior mirror mounted on the driver's  
15           side of the vehicle and either an exterior mirror mounted on the passenger's side of  
16           the vehicle or an interior mirror, a parking brake, an adequate windshield, a  
17           windshield wiper, speedometer, odometer, braking for each wheel, a seat belt  
18           assembly installed at each designated seating position, and a vehicle identification  
19           or serial number.

20           D. Any utility terrain vehicle operated upon a parish road or municipal street  
21           shall be registered with the state of Louisiana through the Department of Public  
22           Safety and Corrections, office of motor vehicles, as an off-road vehicle and shall  
23           display a decal issued by the office of motor vehicles.

24           E. A person operating a utility terrain vehicle shall be at least twenty-one  
25           years of age and possess a valid driver's license.

26           F. Any utility terrain vehicle operated upon a highway of this state shall have  
27           liability insurance with the same minimum limits as required by the provisions of  
28           R.S. 32:900(B).

1                   G.(1) No person shall be a passenger in the open bed of a utility terrain  
2                   vehicle while traveling upon a parish road or municipal street. The provisions of this  
3                   Subsection shall not apply in an emergency situation.

4                   (2) The number of persons permitted to travel in a utility terrain vehicle is  
5                   limited to the number of available seat belts.

6                   H. Nothing contained in this Section shall be construed to prevent parish or  
7                   municipal governments from prohibiting the operation of any utility terrain vehicle  
8                   on any parish road or municipal street under its jurisdiction if the parish or municipal  
9                   government determines that the prohibition is necessary for the safety of the  
10                  motoring public.

11                  I. The Department of Public Safety and Corrections, public safety services,  
12                  shall promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative  
13                  Procedure Act, subject to oversight by the House and Senate committees on  
14                  transportation, highways, and public works, as necessary to implement the provisions  
15                  of this Section. The rules and regulations shall become effective no later than  
16                  January 15, 2016.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_