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Representative Vic Kohring District 26

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Kohring Seeks End to Licensing Requirement **Calls Drivers License “Unnecessary” for Boating, Snowmachining**

(JUNEAU) – Rep. Vic Kohring (R-Wasilla/Peters Creek) said today he plans to hold a hearing Thursday on [House Bill 397](#), which seeks to end a state legal requirement that operators of off-road vehicles must have an automobile driver’s license.

“It is ridiculous that state government requires a person to have a driver’s license to operate a boat, plane, all-terrain vehicle, or snowmachine on all public property,” Kohring said. “What does passing a test to drive a car have to do with running a boat on a lake or river, flying a plane, or riding an ATV while hunting?”

“Those who depend on snowmobiles, boats, and ATVs for basic transportation to work, hunt, and fish in many parts of Alaska need to have their rights protected. This is just one example of government making laws just for the sake of having laws.”

Kohring said he plans to propose revised legislation at Thursday’s meeting of the [House Transportation Committee](#), which he chairs. While the bill would free drivers of off-road vehicles from having to have a valid driver’s license, licenses would still be required to operate such vehicles on public roads. Likewise, the bill would not affect existing laws requiring vehicles driven on-road to have minimum equipment, such as brake lights and turn signals.

“We are not saying that off-road vehicle drivers should be allowed to operate unsafely,” Kohring said. “Having a driver’s license has nothing to do with safe operation of an off-road vehicle. We are saying that if safety is the concern, then let’s focus on safety.”

Kohring said he anticipated taking testimony on the bill from citizen’s boards, user groups, state agencies, local officials and the general public on Thursday, and invited interested parties to contact his office to see how they could weigh in on the issue.

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