



PRESS RELEASE

State Senator Wes Shoemyer – 18th District

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SENATOR WES SHOEMYER PRESENTS SENATE BILL 774 TO SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Senator's Father Testifies at Hearing

JEFFERSON CITY – Senator Wes Shoemyer, D-Clarence, today presented Senate Bill 774 to the Senate Transportation Committee. SB 774 would exempt utility vehicles or “mini-trucks” from having to be titled and registered. These utility vehicles are typically used in farming, lawn care, landscaping services or as maintenance vehicles and are generally used off-road.

“Due to the rise in fuel costs, you are seeing more and more of these mini-trucks and these vehicles are not clarified in state statute,” Sen. Shoemyer said. “Our law enforcement agencies don’t really know how to react to them and having been issuing tickets for failing to register the vehicles, even though there’s no mechanism to register them with the state.”

Sen. Shoemyer says SB 774 would allow these vehicles to be used on secondary roads and access roads in Missouri. He also has introduced a Senate Committee Substitute which would allow for full licensure of these utility vehicles, although he expects some opposition from federal highway officials to that proposal.

“Whenever you see one of these vehicles on the road, you know they are being used for work, folks are not out there just running around and joyriding,” Sen. Shoemyer said. “This will give our law enforcement agencies some direction because they are getting pressure from the federal government to crack down on these vehicles and since there are no statutes to guide them, they’re just issuing tickets.”

Sen. Shoemyer notes his father, Robert Shoemyer, has been ticketed for driving a utility vehicle.

“Yes, he’s been ticketed for failure to register,” Sen. Shoemyer said. “My father lives in town and could drive a pickup that gets seven miles to the gallon to our farm but he’s trying to be mindful of fuel efficiency and drives one of these mini-trucks that get 35 miles to the gallon.”

Robert Shoemyer testified in favor of SB 774 during Wednesday’s Senate Transportation Committee hearing.

The bill defines the term “utility vehicle” as any motorized vehicle manufactured and used exclusively for off-highway purposes, travels on four or six wheels, and is used primarily for agricultural, landscaping, lawn care or maintenance purposes. The vehicles are prohibited from being operated within any river or stream, unless permission is granted by the landowner or when fording a low-water crossing. The utility vehicles cannot travel more than 30 miles per hour and cannot carry a passenger, except for agricultural purposes. SB 774 exempts utility vehicles from titling and registration.

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“These vehicles are very economical to purchase and operate, and we should give those folks the chance to be fuel efficient,” Sen. Shoemyer said. “Many times when I get in my pickup, I’m really overusing my truck, and it makes more sense to have something that will do the job and be much more efficient. This is really about helping our farmers be more efficient in their operations.”

If the Senate Transportation Committee approves SB 774, the measure will move to the full Senate for floor debate.

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Sen. Wes Shoemyer, D-Clarence, is joined by his father, Robert Shoemyer, Wednesday morning as Sen. Shoemyer presents Senate Bill 774 to the Senate Transportation Committee at the state Capitol in Jefferson City.