

HB 1346 OHVs

Chair Ruby and Transportation Committee.

My name is Doug Pearson I am a resident of Bismarck, I live in a subdivision 3 miles outside of city limits, and I am in favor of HB 1346. I want to make this clear. I am not against OHVs, but what I am against is the bad behavior being displayed in my neighborhood and subdivisions surrounding the Bismarck area. I grew up on a farm where we rode motorcycles as young boys so I know how kids can be, but one thing my parents taught us was not to disrespect people and their property. We had consequences and we knew if we crossed that line our keys would be pulled.

For the next hour I could tell you stories from the past 23 years of the bad behavior from teenagers and adults riding OHVs out in our subdivisions. I will share a story that happened 2 years ago of a 12 year old boy that would come from another subdivision to visit my neighbor's son during the summer. You could always hear him coming from a quarter mile away revving the engine speeding and driving recklessly. I shared my concerns with my neighbor that this boy, the way he was driving would get in an accident and hurt himself or someone else. Later on that summer my neighbor caught me outside and said I want to show you something, he pulled out his phone and showed me a picture of this young boy in a hospital bed, I asked what happened he said the boy was in a serious motorcycle accident. Last summer I was driving home on our blacktop road that leads to our subdivision. This same boy, now 14 years old, popped a wheelie in the other lane as he went by my vehicle. What if he would have lost control and went into my lane? I am concerned for my safety, my wife, my children, my grandchildren and our pets. In our subdivision we still have gravel roads and all the subdivisions around us have blacktop, so we have OHVs coming from city limits where they can't ride and other subdivisions coming into our neighborhood, they are speeding, fishtailing up and down our roads and cutting cookies and the rocks end up in my ditch which I hit with my lawn mower. I have had slow down signs run over and stolen. It's like the wild west, total lawlessness. Over the years I have talked to the Township board, County commission and our Sheriff's department and they tell me there is nothing they can do. On average I call the Sheriff's department 5-10 a year and they tell me the laws have no teeth. So please put some teeth into our laws to address this ongoing issue. All we are asking for is the same rule of law as people within city limits are receiving.

So how do we fix this problem, first we must acknowledge there is a problem, second the current century code must be enforced by law enforcement, third there must be consequences for these bad behaviors being acted out, if there isn't these issues will continue, and last I will end with this, we as parent, grandparents have a responsibility to pass onto the next generation of how to treat each other with dignity, respect for other people and their property and treat others the way you would want to be treated, because we can't fix this problem with more OHV safety training that is just more head knowledge and its not working, this issue is much deeper than that, this is a heart issue as who we are as a society, just do what's right.

Thankyou Doug Pearson