



## **Governor Bill Richardson Backs Bill To Ensure Safety of All-Terrain Vehicle Riders**

**New law promotes safe operation, training, and will expand  
opportunities for proper ATV use**

For Immediate Release  
January 21, 2005

Contact: Pahl Shipley  
505.476.2202

SANTA FE- Governor Bill Richardson today announced his support for a bill that promotes the safe operation of All-terrain Vehicles (ATVs), requires young operators to wear helmets and receive training, and will establish safe and responsible ATV use areas around the state.

“This is, plain and simple, a law that will save lives,” said Governor Richardson. “It will protect our citizens, especially children. It will create jobs and benefit our economy, particularly in rural areas. It is a law that makes sense.”

Senate Bill 252- the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Act- is sponsored by Senator Dede Feldman. Representative Bobby Gonzalez will sponsor a companion bill in the House.

According to the University of New Mexico, crashes involving All-Terrain Vehicles, or ATVs, have **killed 62 New Mexicans** during the past ten years. One-fourth of those killed were under the age of 16. In that age group, 93% were not wearing helmets, 40% were passengers, and many were riding on ATVs not designed to carry passengers.

Senator Feldman’s bill creates reasonable requirements for helmets, eye protection, and training for young riders. It mandates adult supervision for riders under the age of 13. The bill would require approved training for riders under the age of 18, and it prohibits passengers unless an ATV is specifically designed to carry them.

The legislation would also require ATV owners to register their ATVs and obtain a permit to operate them. The fees generated will be used to develop safe, accessible and environmentally responsible areas around the state to ride. This will help create jobs, increase tourism, and protect New Mexico's public lands.

"These requirements are simply common sense," Governor Richardson said. "The tragedy of ATV deaths is that they are completely preventable. This legislation takes the first step toward eliminating these needless tragedies, while ensuring New Mexicans can enjoy ATV's, and our great outdoors."

#30#