

**Mike Ritze, D.O., M.F.S.A.**

State Representative, District 80

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**Committees:**

Public Health  
Public Safety  
Appropriations and Budget Subcommittee  
on Public Health and Social Services

**Oklahoma House of Representatives**

March 19, 2009

***Weekly Review***

***New Round of Committee Work Begins***

House members began the second round of committee work this week, hearing Senate bills that gained approval in that chamber.

House lawmakers have until April 9 to complete committee work on the 561 Senate bills and joint resolutions that made it through that chamber. (That's a much easier workload than what lawmakers faced at the start of session when they had to work through the 1,270 bills and 46 joint resolutions during the first round of committee work).

All Senate measures that make it out of committee must then receive a vote from the entire Oklahoma House of Representatives by April 23.

***House, Senate to Require Disclosure of Stimulus Funds Use in Law***

A resolution that would ensure federal stimulus dollars are spent in an accountable and transparent way passed the Legislature this week.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 13 requires every state agency that receives federal stimulus funds to submit a plan for the expenditure of such funds to the chairmen of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and the governor.

Further, the resolution states that an agency cannot spend the federal funds without the additional dollars being accounted for in the state agency's budget limits put into law every legislative session.

Each year, a budget limitation bill is passed for each agency to show legislative intent in the expenditure of appropriated funds. Under the resolution, agencies will receive legislative guidance on use of the stimulus dollars much like they do every year with state dollars.

House Speaker Chris Benge and Senate Pro Tempore Glenn Coffee have delegated their Appropriations Committee chairmen, Rep. Ken Miller and Sen. Mike Johnson, to serve as oversight leaders in the Legislature.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 13 passed the House with a vote of 79-2.

***Lawmakers Push for Better Child ATV Regulations to Improve Safety***

Two legislators are urging the federal government to amend regulations that have banned the sale of youth all-terrain vehicles and motorcycles, saying the current regulations are unintentionally increasing the likelihood of child injury.

State Reps. Ken Luttrell (D-Ponca City) and Rex Duncan (R-Sand Springs) have authored House Resolution 1024 urging the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission to provide a waiver or exclusion for youth all-terrain vehicles and motorcycles from toy lead-limit requirements.

The 2008 federal lead regulations, intended to apply to children's toys, have been applied to component parts of youth vehicles, such as the engine, brakes, battery and other parts – making the vehicles noncompliant.

Under the new regulations, most youth vehicles are now illegal. As a result, children are now effectively forced to drive and ride on adult-sized motorcycles they cannot safely handle, increasing the chance of accidents.

After the regulations were approved, powersports dealers were told to halt all sales of vehicles designed for children age 12 and younger. In 2008, there were an estimated 100,000 youth bikes sold in the United States according to the Motorcycle Industry Council.

Dealers nationally are now stuck with close to \$100 million in now-illegal unsold vehicles, according to estimates.

Officials with House of Kawasaki, an Oklahoma City dealer, said the new regulations are harming many local businesses.

The regulations have also had the unintended consequence of reducing child safety on previously sold motorcycles, Luttrell and Duncan noted. With parts for all youth vehicles now illegal, many are no longer safe to operate and others could perform improperly.

House Resolution 1024 urges the Consumer Product Safety Commission to take a "common sense" approach to implementation of the lead regulations, noting "there should be a waiver or exclusion for products that do not truly present a lead risk to children."

The resolution is expected to receive a vote in the Oklahoma House of Representatives in the next week.

As your Representative, I will always strive to be pro-business by reducing the burdens of government regulation on the Free enterprise system. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 1-800-522-8502.



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