



SENATE MINORITY LEADER
BRIAN W. JONES

Senate Bill 586 Fact Sheet – eMoto OHV Registration

SUMMARY

SB 586 establishes a clear legal framework for registering electric motorcycles (eMotos) as off-highway vehicles (OHVs) in California, ensuring riders have authorized places to operate them safely and legally.

BACKGROUND

Electric motorcycles (eMotos) are an emerging category of OHVs that currently face registration barriers in California. Without a clear legal framework, riders have no authorized places to operate them on public lands, leading to safety, enforcement, and land management challenges.

Currently, eMotos are not explicitly recognized as electric off-highway motorcycles under California law, preventing them from being registered with an OHV Green Sticker. Additionally, the DMV requires an engine number for OHV motorcycle registration, a requirement that does not apply to electric vehicles, making registration impossible for eMotos.

Without a legal pathway for OHV registration, riders are forced onto public streets, sidewalks, and non-motorized trails, creating safety risks and enforcement challenges. With the eMoto market growing rapidly—approximately 100,000 units were sold nationwide in 2022, including an estimated 30,000 in California—this issue will only continue to expand.

SOLUTION

SB 586 will codify eMotos as electric off-highway motorcycles, ensuring they qualify for OHV registration. It will also remove the internal combustion engine number requirement, allowing

eMoto riders to obtain a Green Sticker and legally access OHV-designated areas. The bill will reduce illegal riding on public infrastructure by providing a clear legal pathway for eMoto use in appropriate OHV recreation areas. Additionally, it will assist law enforcement and land managers by clarifying where eMotos can and cannot be used. Finally, SB 586 supports responsible recreation by directing eMoto riders toward designated trails rather than public roads or non-motorized areas.

Ensuring a safe and legal place for eMoto riders to operate will enhance safety while easing the burden on law enforcement through clear guidelines. SB 586 also promotes responsible recreation by directing eMoto riders toward designated trails rather than public roads or non-motorized areas, reducing conflicts with other land users. With their zero-emission and quieter operation compared to gas-powered OHVs, eMotos will help minimize environmental impact. The bill does not create new OHV areas—it simply updates DMV registration rules to reflect modern vehicle technology.

SB 586 removes outdated barriers and creates a legal framework for eMoto riders to access OHV areas responsibly. By making a simple update to DMV registration requirements, California can improve safety, support enforcement, and accommodate a growing market of electric off-highway motorcycles.

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