



For Immediate Release

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Specialty Vehicle Institute of America Welcomes Consumer Federation of America's Call for State Legislation; Stands By Industry Record of Promoting ATV Safety

Washington, D.C., August 20, 2003 – Specialty Vehicle Institute of America (SVIA) President Tim Buche called on the Consumer Federation of America (CFA) to join forces today to work towards passing appropriate state legislation to improve All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) safety, but criticized CFA and its allied environmental groups for misleading and inaccurate statements regarding the ATV industry's position on safety issues. Mr. Buche issued the following statement:

“The recent hearings by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and their latest accident data provide ample evidence that the vast majority of ATV-related accidents result from misuse of the product. We are pleased that CFA and its allies have finally recognized the importance of reasonable state legislation in promoting safe and responsible ATV use,” stated Buche. “We hope that CFA will now put ‘its money where its mouth is’ and join SVIA in advocating for state ATV safety legislation.”

“I would also like to correct CFA's mischaracterization of the ATV industry's position on ATV safety issues:

First, the ATV industry is working actively with the CPSC, user groups, dealers and all others interested in promoting ATV safety. The CPSC recently held field hearings in West Virginia and Alaska. What may have surprised the CFA was the enthusiastic support for ATVs expressed at these hearings and the skepticism that the CFA's proposed federal ban on ATV sales would have any real world effects. The consensus that was repeated by witness after witness advocated education, state legislation and adult supervision as the keys to improving ATV safety.

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Second, from reading the CFA ‘report’ issued today, CFA and its allies would apparently like the public to believe that any one who expresses an opposing viewpoint on the proposed federal ban is an ‘industry representative.’ In fact, the ATV industry’s position on this issue is and has been the same for over 15 years. Anyone interested in determining the ATV industry’s real position need only take a look at one of our products. They contain large, conspicuous warning labels that recommend against the use of adult-size ATVs by children under 16. We even require purchasers of new ATVs to sign a statement indicating that they have read and understood this restriction. And our model state legislation – which we have been promoting since 1986 – contains the same age recommendation restrictions.

Third, state legislation and parental supervision are the most realistic ways to further promote safe rider behavior. The states have police power to regulate consumer use of the products. The federal government can’t do that, and – as so many different interested parties have testified – the federal ban being proposed by these groups is unrealistic and will do little, if anything, to advance ATV safety. We invite CFA and its allied environmental groups to join the industry in its longstanding efforts to promote reasonable state legislation. To correct another inaccurate statement in the report on this point, the ATV industry is a major supporter of West Virginia safety legislation, and has been promoting such laws for many years without any support from these consumer and environmental groups. Some local dealers in West Virginia are apparently opposed to the latest draft legislation, but they do not speak for the industry. The industry’s longstanding record speaks for itself.

Finally, it should be noted this so-called ATV ‘safety’ initiative is being spearheaded by environmental organizations, such as Natural Trails & Water Coalition and the Bluewater Network, who are well-known opponents of ATVs and are aggressively trying to eliminate all forms of motorized recreation for Americans on public lands.

Education, state legislation and parental supervision are the most effective ways to address rider behavior. We invite these groups to join the industry in its longstanding efforts to promote these responsible, real world approaches to ATV safety.”

The Specialty Vehicle Institute of America® (SVIA) is an information source about the all-terrain vehicle (ATV) industry. SVIA provides information on ATV standards as well as promoting model state legislation on ATV riding. It also serves as a liaison with state and federal agencies on ATV training and their influence upon the environment. Membership is open to all corporations regularly engaged in the business of manufacturing, importing or wholesale distribution of ATVs in the United States. SVIA was formed in 1983 as a national not-for-profit trade association and is based in Irvine, California. Its members include AlphaSports, Arctic Cat, Bombardier, Honda, John Deere, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha.

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