



# Amy Loudenbeck

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S 31ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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**Assembly Committee on Natural Resources & Sporting Heritage  
Testimony on Assembly Bill 670  
February 12, 2014**

Good Morning Chairman Ott and Colleagues. Thank for holding a public hearing on AB 670 relating to the registration of antique snowmobiles.

Snowmobiling has a long history in Wisconsin. The first snowmobile was invented in Sayner in 1924 (see article and patent documents). Collections such as those at the Vilas County Historical Museum and the International Snowmobile Hall of Fame in Eagle River and the Snowmobile Hall of Fame in St. Germain showcase sleds from dozens of different manufacturers.

The cutoff for "antique" sleds under current law means that sleds produced by John Deere in Horicon, Wisconsin from 1972 – 1984 (see article) are not allowed to receive the reduced registration fee that recognizes their status as a collector or vintage machine. These sleds are clearly not intended for regular trail riding, but certainly an owner might want to participate in an occasional vintage or exhibition ride.

Minnesota presently recognizes collector status and allows for snowmobiles over 25 years old to be registered for \$6. Michigan recently created a one-time \$50 registration for vintage sleds (25 years and older) due to the overwhelming popularity of vintage rides, to boost tourism and overall interest in the sport. (see handouts)

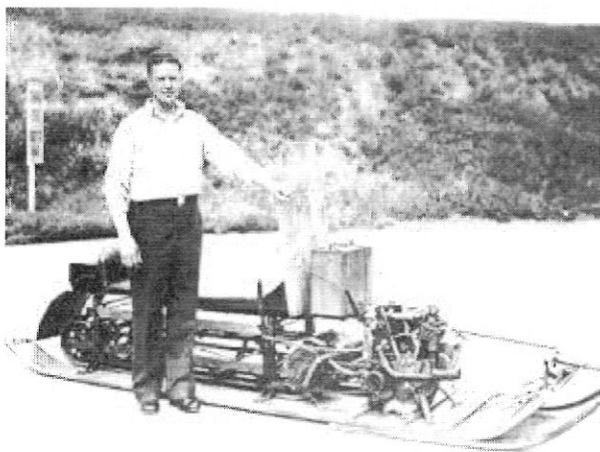
The amendment that you have today would provide for a first time registration fee of \$20 for two years, and a \$5 year renewal every two years. This would allow registered "antique" snowmobiles to count in the gas tax formula. This change was made to protect the solvency of the funding formula that we are all aware is currently being reevaluated in other legislation.

We realize there will still be a potential reduction in revenue based on the snowmobiles from 1966-1984 that will move to the new registration fee structure. Although we cannot predict the potential increase in registrations (and gas tax) that might occur because of people registering machines that they currently own but are not willing to pay full rate to register because of their limited use. We are confident that new registrations will help offset the projected reductions.

We are also hopeful that this bill will help renew an interest in our rich snowmobile history – which will help clubs, tourism, and the overall rich sporting heritage of snowmobiling in Wisconsin.

**ONALASKA HOLMEN**  
**Courier-Life**

ODD WISCONSIN

**ODD WISCONSIN: State has claim as snowmobile's birthplace**

DECEMBER 26, 2013 3:00 PM

All it takes is a halfways decent snowstorm and all of a sudden thousands of people are zipping-up jackets, strapping on helmets and revving up for a session of snowmobiling. But how many of them know that the snowmobile was invented right here in Wisconsin?

Carl Eliason of Sayner wanted an alternative way to get around during the winter after injuring his foot in 1924. Amateur inventors had rigged up unreliable "snow buggies" by mounting cars or bicycles on skis but

Eliason had the idea to start with a toboggan instead.

On top of it he mounted a boat engine, bicycle parts, and rope-controlled steering skis. He worked on this invention for two years in a small garage behind his general store.

In 1927, he obtained a patent for a "Motor Toboggan" and then tinkered with it for more than a decade. Through trial and error he continually improved it, turning out a few custom-built vehicles each year.

By 1939 demand was so strong that Eliason partnered with the Four Wheel Drive Auto Co. of Clintonville to mass-produce the renamed "snowmobiles." Orders came from as far away as Finland. During World War II, the U.S. Army wanted them.

Eliason's earliest snowmobiles are on display at the marvelous Vilas County Historical Museum in his hometown. The annual World Championship Snowmobile Derby in Eagle River and The International Snowmobile Racing Hall of Fame in St. Germain are testaments to his vision.

Today's models are fancier than Eliason's but snowmobilers around the world have him to thank for the fun and convenience they provide.

Nov. 22, 1927.

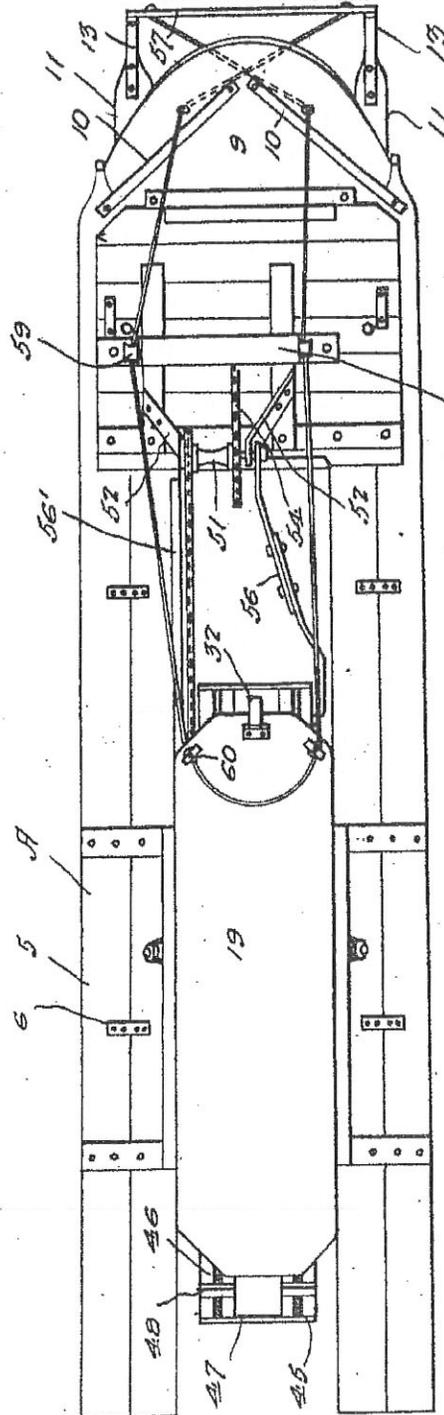
1,650,334

C. J. E. ELIASON  
VEHICLE FOR SNOW TRAVEL

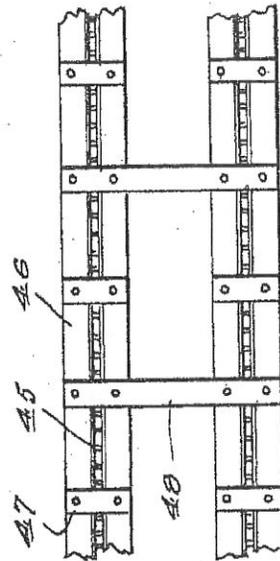
Filed March 5, 1927

4 Sheets-Sheet 1

*Fig. 1.*



*Fig. 8.*



Inventor  
*Carl J. E. Eliason*

By *Clarence A. O'Brien*  
Attorney

Patented Nov. 22, 1927.

1,650,334

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CARL J. E. ELLIASON, OF SAYNER, WISCONSIN.

VEHICLE FOR SNOW TRAVEL.

Application filed March 3, 1927. Serial No. 172,353.

The present invention relates to a vehicle for snow travel and has for its prime object to provide a supporting structure mounted on runners carrying a driving mechanism which may be lowered in engagement with the snow and has an endless tread structure movable to propel the vehicle.

Another important object of the invention lies in the provision of a vehicle of this nature mounted on runners with a driving mechanism that is spring-pressed into engagement with the ground.

Another important object of the invention lies in the provision of a vehicle of this nature mounted on runners which is provided with a driving mechanism that may be held raised in an inoperative position out of engagement with the ground for coasting purposes.

Another very important object of the invention lies in the provision of a vehicle of this nature mounted on runners which are provided with auxiliary runners that may be steered in a convenient manner.

A still further very important object of the invention resides in the provision of a vehicle of this nature which is simple in its construction, strong and durable, thoroughly efficient and reliable in operation, and otherwise well adapted to the purpose for which it is designed.

With the above and numerous other objects in view as will appear as the description proceeds, the invention resides in certain novel features of construction, and in the combination and arrangement of parts as will be hereinafter more fully described and claimed.

In the drawing:—

Figure 1 is a top plan view of the vehicle embodying the features of my invention,

Figure 2 is a side elevation thereof,

Figure 3 is a vertical transverse section therethrough taken substantially on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2,

Figure 4 is a fragmentary longitudinal section taken through the vehicle,

Figure 5 is a fragmentary bottom plan view of the forward end of the vehicle,

Figure 6 is a vertical longitudinal section through the mechanism shown in Figure 5,

Figure 7 is an enlarged detail elevation showing one of the extensible thrust rods,

Figure 8 is an enlarged detail plan view of the endless tread member.

Referring to the drawings in detail, it

will be seen that the letters A denote a pair of spaced parallel runners which are preferably constructed of skies 5, there being two skies to each runner fastened together alongside of each other by strap irons 6. The forward ends of these runners A curve upwardly as is clearly indicated in Figure 6 of the drawing. A sheet of metal 7 is disposed across the forward ends of the runners and has mounted thereon a plurality of cross boards 8. An extension board 9 projects forwardly and inclines upwardly from the forward end of the sheet 7 and is held in place by bars 10 riveted to the upper surface thereof. These bars 10 diverge rearwardly from each other and are fastened to the forward ends of the runners A. A pair of auxiliary runners 11 are pivoted intermediate their ends as at 12 to the forward portions of runners A and these auxiliary runners terminate forwardly of the runners A and have their forward ends curved upwardly and provided with brackets 13 having a steering rope or cable 14 associated therewith. A pair of inverted U-shaped frame members 15 have laterally and outwardly extending terminal portions 16 securely fastened in any suitable manner as at 17 to the upper surfaces of the runners A. These frames are disposed to the rear of the runners A, the forward frame being approximately at the center thereof and the rear member 15 being approximately equidistant from the forward frame member and the rear ends of the runners.

This location of the frame member 15 is preferable but by no means necessary. A platform 19 is supported on the right portions of the inverted U-shaped frame members 15 and functions as a seat for passengers or for any other suitable purpose. A pair of inverted auxiliary U-shaped frame members 20 are disposed one within each frame member 15. The sides of the frame members 15 are slotted as is indicated at 21. Bolts 22 extend from the sides of the auxiliary frame members 20 adjacent their right portions outwardly through the slots 21 and are connected to longitudinally extending bars 23. Springs 24 are attached to the intermediate portions of the longitudinal bars 23 and are trained over pulleys 25 the frames of which are engaged with hooks 26 fixed on the runners A and then the springs extend upwardly and are attached as at 27 to the platform 15, thereby urging the auxil-

# John Deere snowmobiles

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

John Deere designed & built snowmobiles from 1972-1984. The initial design & testing phase came in 1970-1971, when engineers tested other popular snowmobiles, and found ways to improve them. The machines were produced by the John Deere Horicon Works of Horicon, Wisconsin along with Lawn & Garden products. Lawn & Garden equipment is still manufactured there.

## Contents

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## Marketing

The slogan "Nothing Runs Like a Deere", still used today by Deere & Co., started with the John Deere snowmobile line in 1972. From 1978 to 1980, JD used the slogan "Big John - Little John." In 1980, another new slogan was introduced: "Ride the new breed of Deere".

In 1980, John Deere was the official supplier of snowmobiles for the Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid, New York.

## Market exit

In 1982-1984, the snowmobile market was in a downward slide, and the driving force behind the snowmobile program (Executive VP Robert Carlson) had left the company. This made ending the snowmobile program an easy decision for Deere. The parts supply and all snowmobile-related resources were sold to Polaris. There was an understanding that Polaris would continue where Deere left off, selling snowmobiles and parts to the Deere dealers that were interested. This never worked out.

The Snowfire was the last production snowmobile on the market to have a free-air engine, and the last snowmobile in production for John Deere.

## Enduro Team Deere

In 1974, a factory sponsored cross-country race team was assembled to go along with the introduction of the 295/S, Deere's first purpose-built snowmobile for cross-country racing. The team would eventually be known as "Enduro Team Deere". The team had many wins, the most notable being the 1976

Minneapolis - St. Paul International 500. Brian Nelson brought home the trophy on his Liquidator. His sled is currently on display at the Snowmobile Hall of Fame and Museum in St. Germain, Wisconsin. 1977 was the last year for the factory program. Instead, Deere offered support and incentives for independent racers.

## Models

A total of twenty-one models were produced:

Model	Years	Engine
300	1974–1977	Kohler K295-2AX (Walbro)
400	1972–1977	CCW KEC-340/4, /5, KEC-340/22 (Walbro, Bendix)
500	1972–1974	CCW KEC-440/4, /5 (Walbro, Bendix)
600	1973–1975	CCW KEC-440/4, /5 (Walbro, Bendix)
800	1975	CCW KEC-440/22 (Walbro)
JDX4	1973–1975	Kohler K295-2AX (Walbro) CCW KEC-340/22A (Walbro)
JDX4 Special	1974	CCW KEC-340/5 (Bendix)
JDX6	1974–1975	CCW KEC-400/22 (Walbro)
JDX8	1973–1975	CCW KEC-440/21 (Walbro) KEC-440/22 (Walbro) KEC-440/22A (Walbro)
JD295/S	1974	Kioritz KEC-295RS/2 (Mikuni, 2)
JD340/S	1975	Kioritz KEC-340RS/2 (Mikuni, 2)
340 Cyclone	1976–1978	Kioritz 340/22A, 240/22B (Mikuni)
440 Cyclone	1976–1978	Kioritz 340/22A, 240/22B (Mikuni)
340 Liquidator	1976	Kioritz KEC-340rs/24LC (Mikuni, 2)
340 Liquifire	1976–1978	Kioritz 340/23LC (Mikuni, 2)
440 Liquifire	1976–1978	Kioritz 440/23LC, 440/23ALC (Mikuni, 2)
340 Cross Country	1978	Kioritz 340/23LC (Mikuni, 2)
Liquifire	1980–1984	John Deere/Kawasaki TC440A (Mikuni, 2)
Snowfire	1982–1984	John Deere/Kawasaki TB340A (Mikuni)
Spitfire	1978–1982	Kohler K340-2FA (Mikuni) John Deere/Kawasaki TB340A (Mikuni)
Sprintfire	1983–1984	John Deere/Kawasaki TC340E (Mikuni)
Sportfire	1980–1984	John Deere/Kawasaki TA440B (Mikuni)
Trailfire	1979–1984	John Deere/Kawasaki TA340A, TA440A (Mikuni)

- Kioritz made engines for CCW, so they are the same.

**ASA 1 to AB 670 (35 years / \$20 initial registration / \$5 renewal)**

<b>Model Year</b>	<b>Total # of Sleds</b>	<b>Registration Fees Current Law</b>	<b>Registration Fees as Proposed</b>	<b>Registration Fees Lost as Proposed</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>
1967-1979	7,088	\$ 212,640	\$ 141,760	\$ 70,880	2015
1980	1,457	\$ 43,710	\$ 29,140	\$ 14,570	2016
1981	668	\$ 232,680	\$ 48,800	\$ 183,880	2017
1982	348	\$ 54,150	\$ 14,245	\$ 39,905	2018
1983	499	\$ 247,650	\$ 48,760	\$ 198,890	2019
1984	498	\$ 69,090	\$ 18,985	\$ 50,105	2020
	<b>10,558</b>	<b>\$ 859,920</b>	<b>\$ 301,690</b>	<b>\$ 558,230</b>	



[close print view](#)

## Snowmobiles

### Registering a Snowmobile

All snowmobiles must be registered unless used on private property. A three-year registration is issued for \$30. The snowmobile registration number is printed on the three-year snowmobile decal. Snowmobile decals must be displayed on "each side of the forward half of the cowl above the footwell of the snowmobile."

### Registering a Historic Snowmobile

Owners may elect to register snowmobiles 26 or more years old and owned solely as a collector's item as a historic snowmobile. Historic snowmobiles are limited to occasional use and for participation in club activities, exhibitions, tours, parades, and similar uses, including mechanical testing. The registration has a one-time cost of \$50. Unlike regular snowmobile registrations, the historic registration is non-expiring and cannot be transferred with the snowmobile to a new owner.

A single historic snowmobile decal is issued and is placed above or below the headlight or, if the historic snowmobile was not originally equipped with a headlight, on the forward half of the cowl above the footwell.

### Transferring Ownership of a Snowmobile

Snowmobiles are not titled. To transfer ownership, simply complete the back of your snowmobile registration. If your registration is damaged or lost, you may order a replacement online through [ExpressSOS](#) or at a Secretary of State office. A bill of sale with the year, make, vehicle identification number, registration number (if available) and the names and addresses of the buyer and seller may also be used to transfer ownership. An online service for ordering a replacement three-year snowmobile decal is not yet available.

### Snowmobile Trail Permits

In addition to the regular 3-year snowmobile registration, all snowmobiles, except those operated exclusively on lands owned or under the control of the snowmobile owner or those operated on frozen waters for ice fishing, must display an annual Snowmobile Trail Permit sticker. This applies to both residents and nonresidents. A trail permit is not required for snowmobiles registered as a historic snowmobile.

[Trail Permits](#) cost \$45 each and expire on September 30 each year. The generated revenue is designated to develop and maintain snowmobile trails.

Trail Permit stickers are displayed on the front of the snowmobile, centered on the hood directly above the headlight.

> [Additional DNR Snowmobile Information](#)

### Related Documents & Topics

- > [Renew Watercraft](#)
- > [Replacement Registration](#)
- > [Replacement Title](#)
- > [Displaying Decals on Mopeds, Watercraft & Snowmobiles](#) PDF







## Michigan law passes that allows antique snowmobiles on trails for one-time \$50 fee

Howard Meyerson | The Grand Rapids Press By Howard Meyerson | The Grand Rapids Press

on December 26, 2010 at 7:45 AM

Got an antique snowmobile sitting in a barn somewhere collecting dust? Well, 2011 will be the year to get it out on Michigan trails.

The Michigan Legislature passed a law in time for the Christmas holidays that creates a program to allow historic snowmobiles on Michigan trails for a one-time fee of \$50.

"The law will take immediate effect, but the program won't go into effect until next year," Bill Manson said about House Bill 6261, introduced by Rep. Joel Sheltroun (D-West Branch).

Manson is the executive director for the Michigan Snowmobile Association. His group and others pushed for passage of the bill sent to Gov. Jennifer Granholm on Dec. 15. It takes effect Monday.

Historic snowmobile enthusiasts are happy about the decision.

John McGuirk, the former president of the Antique Snowmobile Club of America, said thousands of antique and classic snowmobile could "come out of the woodwork." His organization has 2,400 members.

"We are sitting on pins and needles every day," McGuirk said. "It's got a lot of people talking about it and quite a buzz."

Historic snowmobile owners say the program likely will help the economy because more old sleds will come out of mothballs. Antique and historic sled shows are growing in number and popularity. Each has the potential to become a tourist attraction for Michigan communities.

Many historic sled owners have put them away because they didn't want to pay the full cost to register them and buy annual trail stickers just to use them now and then. Collectors, until now, have had to pay the same as modern snowmobile owners: \$30 for a three-year registration and \$35 for a trail permit annually.

The old sleds, however, never were designed to go fast or be reliable, so they are used far less than modern sleds. Historic snowmobiles are ridden an average of 65 miles per year compared to 1,100 miles for modern sleds, Manson said. A 180-mile day is not unusual for a new sled, but old sleds prove a tough ride for 10 to 20 miles.

"We looked at Michigan registered sleds that are 25 years or older and found 15,000 to 16,000 on the books," Manson said. "(Owners) register them for occasional use on the trails, but their owner's biggest heartburn is to pay full price.

"We figure there are another 25,000 to 30,000 sleds that are still running and sitting in the barn or backyard. ... The feedback we've gotten from the antique snowmobile groups is that this will get them back in the system."

Back in the system means more money for trails and trail enforcement. A new crop of old sleds will enter the system every year.

Proponents like Doug Lubahn, a retired state police officer from Lapeer who represented an online network of vintage sled enthusiasts at hearings in Lansing this year, said he has more than 60 vintage sleds. McGuirk said he owns 140 antique sleds. Collectors, they say, often have several dozen.

"Ten years ago, there was maybe two or three antique and classic snowmobile events in Michigan," Lubahn said. "Now there is one literally every weekend, sometimes multiple events on the same weekend. At the Naubinway show last year, there were just under 200 sleds lined up for the breakfast ride."

Manson said the program will begin next winter for a couple of reasons. Some people already have registered their machines or paid for trail passes. It also will give the Secretary of State office time to reprogram its computers.

Sleds 25 years and older will qualify. To drive them on state trails will require a one-time \$50 fee. Three dollars will go to the Secretary of State for administration. Another \$5 will go to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment to provide grants to county sheriff departments for law enforcement on snowmobile trails. The remaining \$42 would go for construction or maintenance of the state's 6,500-mile snowmobile trail system.

The program should prove to be a win-win-win situation all around. That seems like a pretty good Christmas gift to me.

*E-mail Howard Meyerson: [hmeyerson@grpress.com](mailto:hmeyerson@grpress.com) and follow him on Twitter at [twitter.com/HMeyerson](https://twitter.com/HMeyerson)*

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LRBs0278/1

MGG:jld:rs

2013 - 2014 LEGISLATURE

ASSEMBLY SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT 1,  
TO ASSEMBLY BILL 670

February 11, 2014 - Offered by Representatives WILLIAMS and  
LOUDENBECK.

1

**AN ACT** *to renumber and amend* 350.12 (3) (b); and *to*  
*create* 350.12 (3) (b) 2.

2

of the statutes; **relating to:** registration of antique  
snowmobiles.

*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and  
assembly, do  
enact as follows:*

3

**SECTION 1.** 350.12 (3) (b) of the statutes is renumbered  
350.12 (3) (b) 1. and  
amended to read:

4

5

350.12 **(3)** (b) 1. Any person who is a resident of this state  
and the owner of a

6

snowmobile ~~which has a model year of 1966 or earlier may, upon  
application, register~~

7

~~the snowmobile as an antique snowmobile~~ may register the  
snowmobile as an

8

antique snowmobile if it is at least 35 years old at the time that the  
owner applies

9

for such registration. Upon payment of a fee of \$20, the ~~applicant~~  
owner shall be

10

furnished a registration certificate and decals of a distinctive design,  
in lieu of the

11

design on the decals issued under par. (d). The design shall show that  
the

1

~~snowmobile is an antique. The registration shall be valid without  
payment of any~~

2

~~additional registration fee while the snowmobile is owned by the  
applicant.~~

3 certificate shall be valid for 2 years. If the snowmobile is registered  
4 before April 1,  
5 the 2-year period begins on the July 1 before the date of application. If  
6 the  
7 snowmobile is registered on or after April 1 of a given year, the 2-year  
8 period begins  
9 on the July 1 after the date of application. The fee for issuance of the  
10 initial  
11 registration certificate is \$20. The fee for renewal of the registration is  
12 \$5.

13 3. Unless inconsistent with this paragraph, the provisions of  
14 this chapter  
15 applicable to other snowmobiles shall apply to antique snowmobiles.

SECTION 2. 350.12 (3) (b) 2. of the statutes is created to read:

350.12 (3) (b) 2. An owner who has applied to register a  
snowmobile under this  
paragraph before the effective of this subdivision .... [LRB inserts  
date], is exempt  
from the initial registration requirement under subd. 1. if the person  
submits an  
application to renew the registration under subd. 1. before March 1,  
2015.

(END)



## 2013 ASSEMBLY BILL 670

### REGISTRATION OF ANTIQUE SNOWMOBILES

Testimony by: Gary Eddy - ATV and Snowmobile Education Administrator, Dept. of Natural Resources  
Appearing for Information Only

Committee on Natural Resources and Sporting Heritage  
February 12, 2014 10:31 AM  
Room: 417 North (GAR Hall)

Good morning Chair Ott, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on Assembly Bill 670. Under current law, snowmobiles with a model year of 1966 or older may be registered as an antique and are exempt from renewing their registration. This bill amends the age at which a snowmobile qualifies for antique registration to a model year of 30 years or older. This bill would also increase the number of snowmobiles that are exempt from public use registration. This increase will result in a decrease in registration revenue and a subsequent decrease in revenues generated by the Motor Fuel Gas Tax Transfer.

I understand that a possible amendment may increase the age of snowmobiles eligible for antique registration to model year 35 years or older and also add a requirement that these machines renew their registration every two years. This amendment would reduce the amount of the reduction in registration revenue compared to the original bill language. The proposed amendment would also address the decrease in revenues generated by the Motor Fuel Gas Tax Transfer.

This concludes my written testimony. I would be happy to try and answer any questions you might have.