



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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March 8, 2004

TO: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Assembly Bill 630: Snowmobile Operation and Equipment

Assembly Bill 630 makes a number of changes to current law governing the operation of snowmobiles, equipment on snowmobiles, registration certificates, snowmobile derbies and races, and the snowmobile account funding formula. The bill was introduced on October 29, 2003, and referred to the Committee on Tourism. On February 10, 2004, the Committee recommended the bill for passage on a vote of 10 to 0.

SUMMARY OF BILL

Under AB 630, the calculation used to determine the amount of the motor fuel gas tax transfer from the transportation fund to the snowmobile account of the conservation fund would be adjusted. Under current law, the annual transfer equals the amount of motor fuel tax assessed on 50 gallons of gasoline as of the last day of February of the previous fiscal year multiplied by the number of registered snowmobiles as of the same date, with this result multiplied by 1.4. Under the bill, the date of the calculation would be changed from the last day of February to the last day of March.

In addition, the bill would prohibit any person from knowingly interfering with the proper operation of the odometer of a snowmobile or all-terrain vehicle (ATV), and would prohibit any person, with intent to defraud, from interfering with the proper operation of an hour meter on a snowmobile, ATV, or boat. An hour meter measures and records the hours that the recreational vehicle has been operating. These provisions are similar to current law prohibitions on tampering with the odometer of a motor vehicle or with the hour meter of farm equipment. The bill would exempt the service, repair, or replacement of an hour meter if the number of hours of operation indicated on the meter remain the same as before the repair. If the meter is incapable of registering

the same number of hours as before it was serviced or replaced, a sticker must be affixed to the meter indicating the number of hours on the meter prior to service under the bill.

Under the bill, anyone who knowingly interferes with the proper operation of the odometer of a snowmobile or ATV, or who interferes with the proper operation of an hour meter on a snowmobile, ATV, or boat with the intent to defraud, could be fined up to \$5,000 and imprisoned for up to one year for each violation. The penalty provisions would first apply to offenses committed on the effective date of the bill.

The bill would require any person operating a snowmobile on, or adjacent to, any roadway to observe the roadway speed limit unless the individual is participating in a special event authorized by the local governmental unit having jurisdiction over the roadway. AB 630 would also change the requirement that a law enforcement officer operating a snowmobile on a highway be equipped with a flashing blue light to instead permit the light to be red or blue, or a combination thereof, that is flashing, oscillating, or rotating. Further, AB 630 would require operators of snowmobiles proceeding in opposite directions to proceed with caution and to pass each other to the right.

In addition, the bill would exempt snowmobile accidents occurring during snowmobile races or derbies that are sponsored by certain entities (such as local units of government or snowmobile clubs) from general procedures that must be followed in the event of a snowmobile accident. These procedures include requirements to render aid and to report any accident that involves an injury that requires treatment by a physician to a law enforcement official.

Finally, the bill would specify that upon the transfer of ownership of a snowmobile for which a registration certificate has been issued by this state, or another state, province, or country, the seller deliver the certificate to the purchaser at the time of sale.

FISCAL EFFECT

The bill revises the date on which the motor fuel tax transfer for the snowmobile account of the conservation fund is calculated. By changing the calculation date from the last day of February to the last day in March, the snowmobile account would experience a one-time increase in fiscal year 2004-05 due to the inclusion of a more recent month's worth of registrations. The one-time increase is anticipated to be approximately \$65,000, based on the average number of snowmobiles (3,258) newly registered during this month in previous years. The balance in the transportation fund would be reduced by the estimated \$65,000.

Prepared by: Rebecca Hotynski