



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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SNOWMOBILE PERMIT EXEMPTION

**House Bill 5149 (Substitute H-1)
First Analysis (10-18-95)**

**Sponsor: Rep. Pat Gagliardi
Committee: Conservation,
Environment, and Great Lakes**

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Public Act 99 of 1994 provided a means of generating revenue to maintain and develop state recreation and snowmobile trails by requiring snowmobilers to purchase a \$10 annual Michigan snowmobile trail sticker permit, in addition to a \$15 registration fee. It was estimated that approximately 290,000 snowmobiles were operated in Michigan each year -- 190,000 Michigan snowmobiles and about 100,00 out-of-state snowmobiles -- and that the act would therefore generate almost \$3 million in additional revenue. However, at the time, some protested that the \$10 trail permit sticker should not have to be purchased by persons who operated their snowmobiles exclusively on private land, or who used snowmobiles merely to gain speedy access to their ice shanties. By requiring these people to purchase the sticker, it was contended, the act forced them to subsidize the costs of a snowmobile trails system they did not use. Although, reportedly, it is not the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) policy to have conservation officers issue tickets to those who use their snowmobiles for this purpose, the issue is still a source of conflict to many. It is therefore proposed that those who do not drive snowmobiles on state trails be excluded from the snowmobile permit requirement.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

Under the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, a person wishing to operate a snowmobile in the state must register the vehicle and must purchase an annual snowmobile trail permit sticker. Under House Bill 5149, a trail permit sticker would not be required if the owner stated that the snowmobile would not be operated on state recreation and snowmobile trails, but would only be operated for access to the frozen surface of public waters for the purpose of ice fishing.

MCL 324.82118

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Fiscal information is not available. (10-17-95)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The state's abundance of inland lakes attracts many winter fishing enthusiasts. Some snowmobilers keep old snowmobiles at their cottage shorelines merely for the purpose of driving quickly across a lake to their ice shanties. Others park cars and trailers in public parking areas and drive from there to their ice shanties. It is only fair that these persons should be exempt from having to purchase a \$10 trail permit sticker. Otherwise, they are forced to subsidize the costs of maintaining and developing a snowmobile trail system that they do not use.

POSITIONS:

A representative of the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Law Enforcement Division testified before the committee in support of the bill. (10-17-95)

The Michigan Snowmobile Association supports the bill. (10-17-95)

The Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) has no position on the bill. (10-17-95)

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