

# Legislative Analysis



## MICHIGAN VEHICLE CODE: RECREATIONAL VEHICLE DEFINITIONS

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**House Bill 4781**, as introduced  
**Sponsor: Rep. Joel Sheltroun**  
**House Committee: Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Natural Resources**

**Senate Bill 362 (Substitute S-1)**, as passed the Senate  
**Sponsor: Sen. Jason E. Allen**  
**Senate Committee: Commerce and Tourism**  
**House Committee: Tourism, Outdoor Recreation and Natural Resources**

**Complete to 4-21-09**

## A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4781 AS INTRODUCED 4-2-09 & SENATE BILL 362 AS PASSED THE SENATE 4-1-2009

Both House Bill 4781 and Senate Bill 362 would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to do the following things:

- Define the terms "park model trailer," "recreational vehicle," "travel trailer," "camping trailer," and "fifth wheel trailer."
- Add "recreational vehicle" to the list of vehicles subject to registration and titling requirements when being driven or moved on a highway, remove "pickup trailer" and "camping coach" from this list, and make the specified vehicles subject to those requirements whether on a highway *or a street*.
- Make the list of vehicles exempt from registration and titling requirements when being driven or moved on a highway also exempt when driven or moved *on a street*.
- Make provisions concerning permits for towing mobile homes on highways to apply to both mobile homes *and park model trailers* being towed on highways *or streets*.

Effective dates. House Bill 4781 would take effect on July 1, 2010; Senate Bill 362 would take effect on December 1, 2009.

Tie-bars. House Bill 4781 is tied-barred to Senate Bill 363 or House Bill 4782, meaning that it will not take effect unless one of those bills is also enacted into law. Senate Bill 362 is tie-barred to Senate Bill 363 only.

## FISCAL IMPACT:

The bills would not have a fiscal impact on the state or local units of government.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A Michigan Department of Transportation document entitled "Information on the Movement of Mobile Homes and Building Modules," dated May 2004, which discusses permits for the movement of certain oversized vehicles, is available online at:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MDOT\\_Move\\_Mob\\_Mod\\_T3\\_92163\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MDOT_Move_Mob_Mod_T3_92163_7.pdf)

## DETAILED SUMMARY:

Registration and titling requirements. Under Section 216 of the Code, every motor vehicle, pickup camper, trailer coach, trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer, *when driven or moved on a highway*, is subject to the Code's registration and certificate of title requirements, except for certain vehicles described below. The bills would add "recreational vehicle" to the list of vehicles that are subject to registration and certificate of title provisions, delete "pickup camper" and "trailer coach" from this list, and also make the specified vehicles subject to those provisions when driven or moved on *highways or streets*. (Note, however, that the bills' definition of recreational vehicle, described below, includes motor homes, travel trailers, park model trailers, and pickup campers that do not require permits to be towed on a street or a highway.)

Exceptions to registration and titling requirements. Section 216 lists many vehicles that are not subject to the Code's registration and title certificate provisions *when driven or moved on a highway*. Generally speaking, the bills would make these exceptions apply whether the specified vehicle was being driven *on a street or a highway*.

Mobile home towing permits. The Code prescribes the maximum dimensions of a mobile home that may be towed on a highway, provides for special permits for the towing of a mobile home that exceeds the maximum dimensions, prescribes other requirements for the transport of a mobile home, and authorizes the State Transportation Commission to order the Michigan Department of Transportation to cease issuing the permits under certain conditions. Under the bills, these provisions would also apply to the towing of *park model trailers* and would apply whether the mobile homes or park model trailers are towed on a *highway or street*.

Definitions. The bills would add the following definitions to the Motor Vehicle Code:

Park model trailer. Under Section 38a, the term "park model trailer" would mean a vehicle that (1) is built on a single chassis, mounted on wheels, and is designed to be towed by a motor vehicle from time to time; (2) requires a permit under Section 719a to be towed on a street or highway; (3) is designed to provide recreational seasonal or temporary living quarters; and (4) when used as recreational seasonal or temporary living quarters, may be connected to utilities necessary to operate installed fixtures and appliances; and (5) is not a mobile home as defined in Section 2 of the Mobile Home Commission Act.

(Under existing Section 2(g) of that Act, MCL 125.2302(g), "mobile home" means a structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a chassis and designed to be used as a dwelling with or without permanent foundation, when connected to the required utilities, and includes the plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, and electrical systems contained in the structure.)

Recreational vehicle. The term "recreational vehicle" would mean "a new or used vehicle that has its own motive power or is towed by a motor vehicle; is primarily designed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use; complies with all applicable federal vehicle regulations; and does not require a permit under Section 719a to be operated or towed on a street or highway. The term includes, but is not limited to, a motor home, travel trailer, park model trailer, or pick up camper."

Travel trailer. The term "travel trailer" would mean "a trailer coach, fifth wheel trailer, camping trailer, or other vehicle that is designed to be towed by a motor vehicle, is designed to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use; and does not require a special highway movement permit under Section 719a because of its size and weight when towed on a street or highway."

Camping trailer. The term "camping trailer" would mean "a trailer coach constructed with collapsible side walls that fold for towing and unfold to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use."

Fifth wheel trailer. The term "fifth wheel trailer" would mean "a trailer coach designed to be towed by a motor vehicle using a towing mechanism that is mounted above or forward of the tow-vehicle's rear axle."

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.