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House Bill 4013
Sponsor: Rep. William Van Regenmorter
Committee: Transportation

Complete to 2-10-89

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4013 AS INTRODUCED 1-11-89

The bill would create the environmental road safety act to prohibit the use of common salt for the removal of snow and ice from roads and to explore replacements for salt. The bill would define the term "salt" and prohibit the use of salt beginning August 1, 1991, for the removal of snow and ice from the roads and highways of the state if a replacement would provide safety and long-term cost effectiveness. Under the bill, calcium magnesium acetate, other less environmentally damaging or less corrosive materials, or combinations of those materials would be considered as salt replacements.

The bill would require four studies to be made addressing various aspects of the salt replacement issue. The Toxic Substance Control Commission (with the Department of Natural Resources) would conduct a study of the short and long-term environmental impact of implementing the use of replacements versus the continued use of salt on the roads and highways of the state. The commission would consider any environmental impact associated with the storage of salt versus the storage of replacements for salt. The Department of Commerce would conduct a study of the potential for production of replacements by Michigan businesses and whether economic incentives to encourage production were necessary and desirable. The Department of Transportation would conduct a study of the safety and effectiveness of replacements on the roads and highways of the state. The department would also consider the effect of salt and replacements with respect to corrosion or deterioration of the roads, highways, and bridges of the state and the vehicles operating on, and structures located near, those roads, highways and bridges. The studies would have to be completed, with copies sent to the Department of Management and Budget and the Commission for Environmental Road Safety, by May 1, 1990. The Department of Management and Budget (DMB) would conduct a study of the long-term cost effectiveness of using replacements instead of salt on the roads and highways of the state. The DMB would estimate the total cost or savings over a period of 10 years of the environmental impact, corrosion, and economic potential reflected by the studies conducted by the other departments. The estimated costs or savings would be incorporated into an annual cost per Michigan registered vehicle comparing salt and replacements. In the study, the DMB would also consider the financial impact on local units of government for using replacements for salt and investigate and recommend ways to avert the impact of added expenses. The study would be completed, with a copy to the Commission for Environmental Road Safety, by September 30, 1990.

The bill would create the Commission for Environmental Road Safety no later than May 1, 1990 for the purpose of evaluating the studies submitted to it and to make recommendations to the legislature based on the studies relative to the use of salt replacements. The commission would complete its evaluation and make a report to the legislature by January 1, 1991.

The governor would appoint seven members to the commission within 90 days after the effective date of the bill. The appointments would be made with the

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consent of the Senate. Commission members would serve two-year terms. The commission would include a representative of local units of government, an economist, a representative of environmental interests, a representative of business, a highway engineer, a representative of public health interests, and a representative of the general public.