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"FARM PLATES" FOR TRANSPORT OF LIVESTOCK BEDDING OR FEED

House Bill 5754 (Substitute H-1) First Analysis (5-5-98)

Sponsor: Rep. Michael Nye
Committee: Agriculture

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Under the Michigan Vehicle Code, owners of trucks, truck tractors, or road tractors used exclusively to transport ("gratuitously") either farm crops between the fields where the crops are produced and where they are stored, or fertilizer, seed or spray material from the farm to the field, are eligible for special \$20 registrations. This registration fee is credited to the Michigan Transportation Fund and used to defray the expenses of the special registration program.

A farmer who used sand from a sand pit on his farm for bedding for his livestock reportedly was stopped by police and ticketed for using his "farm plate" to transport his sand as bedding for his livestock, on the grounds that the only statutory uses allowed under these special "farm plates" are for transporting either farm crops or fertilizer, seed, or spray material. Legislation has been introduced that would allow the transport of livestock feed and bedding on a "farm plate."

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to add the transportation of livestock bedding, between the field where produced and the place of storage, or feed, from on-farm storage to an on-farm feeding site, to the uses eligible for this special farm registration. The bill would define "feed" to mean hay or silage, and "livestock bedding" to mean straw, sawdust, or sand.

MCL 257.802

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

According to the House Fiscal Agency analysis of the bill as introduced (the substitute added definitions of "feed" and "livestock bedding"), the bill could result in more vehicles registering for a farm plate. Depending on whether or not more farmers applied for

a farm plate due to the bill, state revenue to the Michigan Transportation Fund could decrease. (4-24-98)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

Since, presumably, the whole point of having a special "farmer's plate" is to facilitate the ability of working farms to go about their business without unnecessary inconvenience, it makes sense to allow the transport of livestock bedding and feed (from the field or on-farm storage to an on-farm site) in addition to the transportation of crops, fertilizer, and seed that currently is allowed under the law.

POSITIONS:

There are no positions on the bill.

Analyst: S. Ekstrom

■ 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.

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