

AMBER LIGHTS BETWEEN SNOW REMOVAL JOBS AND SNOWPLOW BLADE WIDTH

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House Bill 5766 (reported from committee as substitute H-2)
Sponsor: Rep. Triston Cole
Committee: Transportation and Infrastructure
Complete to 5-9-18

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

BRIEF SUMMARY:

House Bill 5766 would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to allow a commercial snow removal vehicle to activate its flashing, rotating, or oscillating amber lights when traveling between snow or ice removal jobs. The bill would also allow for snowplow blades that are up to eleven feet wide without requiring a special permit for the extra width.

DETAILED SUMMARY:

Currently under the Michigan Vehicle Code, commercial snow removal vehicles are required to be operated with at least one flashing, rotating, or oscillating yellow or amber light that is clearly visible through an arc of 360 degrees from a distance of 500 feet when in use.

House Bill 5766 would amend the Code to allow a commercial snow removal vehicle to activate those flashing, rotating, or oscillating yellow or amber lights when the vehicle is traveling between locations where it will be used for snow or ice removal.

Further, Section 717 of the Code currently specifies that the total outside width of a vehicle or vehicle load must not exceed 96 inches (eight feet), except as otherwise provided under that section.

House Bill 5766 would amend Section 717 to allow a person to operate or move a truck with a snowplow blade that is up to 132 inches (eleven feet) wide without obtaining a special permit for an extra wide vehicle or load under Section 725 of the Code. This provision would not apply to a person operating a front-end loader. It would only apply between October 1 and May 1 of each year. A person operating a truck with such a blade would be required to angle the plow blade or use some other method to minimize its overwidth condition when not engaged in snow removal.

The bill would take effect 90 days after being enacted.

MCL 257.698 and 257.717

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill's amendment of Section 698 of the Michigan Vehicle Code regarding lights used by snow removal vehicles has no apparent fiscal impact. The bill's amendment of Section 717 would exempt, within limits, snowplow blades from the section's normal 96-inch width limitation as well as permitting requirements under Section 725. The amendment could reduce permit fee revenue of some local road agencies, although the amount of revenue loss and the specific agencies affected cannot be predicted. We do not believe the amount of revenue loss would be significant.¹

POSITIONS:

A representative of Curbco, Inc., testified in support of the bill. (4-24-18)

The Michigan Green Industries Association indicated support for the bill. (4-24-18)

The Michigan Nursery & Landscape Association indicated support for the bill. (5-8-18)

The Michigan Department of Transportation has no position on the bill. (5-8-18)

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

¹ For additional information on permitting requirements, see the House Fiscal Agency publication [Fiscal Focus – Transport Permits and the Regulation of Vehicle Size, Weight, and Load](#), February 6, 2018.