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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD SESSION

H. F. No. 609

01/19/2023 Authored by Hansen, R., The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to natural resources; modernizing statutes related to the registration,
1.3 transfer, and operation of snowmobiles; amending Minnesota Statutes 2022,
1.4 sections 84.788, subdivision 5; 84.82, subdivision 2, by adding a subdivision;
1.5 84.821, subdivision 2; 84.84; 84.86, subdivision 1; 84.87, subdivision 1; repealing
1.6 Minnesota Rules, parts 6100.5000, subparts 3, 4, 5; 6100.5700, subpart 4.

1.7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.8 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 84.788, subdivision 5, is amended to read:

1.9 Subd. 5. Report of ownership transfers; fee. (a) Application for transfer of ownership
1.10 of an off-highway motorcycle registered under this section must be made to the commissioner
1.11 within 15 days of the date of transfer.

1.12 (b) An application for transfer must be executed by the registered current owner and the
1.13 purchaser using a bill of sale that includes the vehicle serial number.

1.14 (c) The purchaser is subject to the penalties imposed by section 84.774 if the purchaser
1.15 fails to apply for transfer of ownership as provided under this subdivision.

1.16 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 84.82, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

1.17 Subd. 2. Application, issuance, issuing fee. (a) Application for registration or
1.18 reregistration shall be made to the commissioner or an authorized deputy registrar of motor
1.19 vehicles in a format prescribed by the commissioner and shall state the legal name and
1.20 address of every owner of the snowmobile.

1.21 (b) A person who purchases a snowmobile from a retail dealer shall make application
1.22 for registration to the dealer at the point of sale. The dealer shall issue a dealer temporary

2.1 21-day registration permit to each purchaser who applies to the dealer for registration. The
 2.2 temporary permit must contain the dealer's identification number and phone number. Each
 2.3 retail dealer shall submit completed registration and fees to the deputy registrar at least once
 2.4 a week. No fee may be charged by a dealer to a purchaser for providing the temporary
 2.5 permit.

2.6 (c) Upon receipt of the application and the appropriate fee, the commissioner or deputy
 2.7 registrar shall issue to the applicant, or provide to the dealer, an assigned registration number
 2.8 or a commissioner or deputy registrar temporary 21-day permit. The registration number
 2.9 must be printed on a registration decal issued by the commissioner or a deputy registrar.
 2.10 Once issued, the registration ~~number~~ decal must be affixed to the snowmobile in a clearly
 2.11 visible and permanent manner for enforcement purposes ~~as the commissioner of natural~~
 2.12 ~~resources shall prescribe~~ according to subdivision 3b. A dealer subject to paragraph (b)
 2.13 shall provide the registration materials or temporary permit to the purchaser within the
 2.14 temporary 21-day permit period. The registration is not valid unless signed by at least one
 2.15 owner.

2.16 (d) Each deputy registrar of motor vehicles acting pursuant to section 168.33 shall also
 2.17 be a deputy registrar of snowmobiles. The commissioner of natural resources in agreement
 2.18 with the commissioner of public safety may prescribe the accounting and procedural
 2.19 requirements necessary to ensure efficient handling of registrations and registration fees.
 2.20 Deputy registrars shall strictly comply with these accounting and procedural requirements.

2.21 (e) In addition to other fees prescribed by law, an issuing fee of \$4.50 is charged for
 2.22 each snowmobile registration renewal, duplicate or replacement registration card, and
 2.23 replacement decal, and an issuing fee of \$7 is charged for each snowmobile registration and
 2.24 registration transfer issued by:

2.25 (1) a registrar or a deputy registrar and must be deposited in the manner provided in
 2.26 section 168.33, subdivision 2; or

2.27 (2) the commissioner and must be deposited in the state treasury and credited to the
 2.28 snowmobile trails and enforcement account in the natural resources fund.

2.29 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 84.82, is amended by adding a subdivision to
 2.30 read:

2.31 Subd. 3b. Display of registration decal. (a) A person must not operate a snowmobile
 2.32 in the state or allow another to operate the person's snowmobile in the state unless the

3.1 snowmobile has its unexpired registration decal affixed to each side of the snowmobile and
 3.2 the decals are legible.

3.3 (b) The registration decal must be affixed:

3.4 (1) for snowmobiles made after June 30, 1972, in the areas provided by the manufacturer
 3.5 under section 84.821, subdivision 2; and

3.6 (2) for all other snowmobiles, on each side of the cowling on the upper half of the
 3.7 snowmobile.

3.8 (c) When any previously affixed registration decal is destroyed or lost, a duplicate must
 3.9 be affixed in the same manner as provided in paragraph (b).

3.10 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 84.821, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

3.11 **Subd. 2. Area for registration number.** All snowmobiles made after June 30, 1972,
 3.12 and sold in Minnesota, shall be designed and made to provide an area on which to affix the
 3.13 registration ~~number decal~~. ~~This area shall be at a location and of dimensions prescribed by~~
 3.14 ~~rule of the commissioner.~~ A clear area must be provided on each side of the cowling with
 3.15 a minimum size of 3-1/2 square inches and at least 12 inches from the ground when the
 3.16 machine is resting on a hard surface.

3.17 Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 84.84, is amended to read:

3.18 **84.84 TRANSFER OR TERMINATION OF SNOWMOBILE OWNERSHIP.**

3.19 (a) Within 15 days after the transfer of ownership, or any part thereof, other than a
 3.20 security interest, or the destruction or abandonment of any snowmobile, written notice of
 3.21 the transfer or destruction or abandonment shall be given to the commissioner in such form
 3.22 as the commissioner shall prescribe.

3.23 (b) An application for transfer must be executed by the ~~registered~~ current owner and the
 3.24 purchaser using a bill of sale that includes the vehicle serial number.

3.25 (c) The purchaser is subject to the penalties imposed by section 84.88 if the purchaser
 3.26 fails to apply for transfer of ownership as provided under this subdivision. Every owner or
 3.27 part owner of a snowmobile shall, upon failure to give notice of destruction or abandonment,
 3.28 be subject to the penalties imposed by section 84.88.

4.1 Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 84.86, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

4.2 Subdivision 1. **Required rules, fees, and reports.** (a) With a view of achieving maximum
4.3 use of snowmobiles consistent with protection of the environment the commissioner of
4.4 natural resources shall adopt rules in the manner provided by chapter 14, for the following
4.5 purposes:

4.6 (1) registration of snowmobiles ~~and display of registration numbers;~~

4.7 (2) use of snowmobiles insofar as game and fish resources are affected;

4.8 (3) use of snowmobiles on public lands and waters, or on grant-in-aid trails;

4.9 (4) uniform signs to be used by the state, counties, and cities, which are necessary or
4.10 desirable to control, direct, or regulate the operation and use of snowmobiles;

4.11 (5) specifications relating to snowmobile mufflers; and

4.12 (6) a comprehensive snowmobile information and safety education and training program;
4.13 ~~including that includes~~ but is not limited to ~~the preparation and dissemination of preparing~~
4.14 and disseminating snowmobile information and safety advice to the public, ~~the training of~~
4.15 snowmobile operators, and ~~the issuance of~~ issuing snowmobile safety certificates to
4.16 snowmobile operators who successfully complete the snowmobile safety education and
4.17 training course.

4.18 (b) For the purpose of administering ~~such~~ the program under paragraph (a), clause (6),
4.19 and to defray expenses of training and certifying snowmobile operators, the commissioner
4.20 shall collect a fee from each person who receives the youth or adult training. The
4.21 commissioner shall collect a fee, to include a \$1 issuing fee for licensing agents, for issuing
4.22 a duplicate snowmobile safety certificate. The commissioner shall establish both fees in a
4.23 manner that neither significantly overrecovers nor underrecovers costs, including overhead
4.24 costs, involved in providing the services. The fees are not subject to the rulemaking provisions
4.25 of chapter 14, and section 14.386 does not apply. The fees may be established by the
4.26 commissioner notwithstanding section 16A.1283. The fees, except for the issuing fee for
4.27 licensing agents under this subdivision, shall be deposited in the snowmobile trails and
4.28 enforcement account in the natural resources fund and the amount thereof, except for the
4.29 electronic licensing system commission established by the commissioner under section
4.30 84.027, subdivision 15, and issuing fees collected by the commissioner, is appropriated
4.31 annually to the Enforcement Division of the Department of Natural Resources for ~~the~~
4.32 ~~administration of such~~ administering the programs. In addition to the fee established by the
4.33 commissioner, instructors may charge each person any fee paid by the instructor for the

5.1 person's online training course and up to the established fee amount for class materials and
 5.2 expenses. The commissioner shall cooperate with private organizations and associations,
 5.3 private and public corporations, and local governmental units in furtherance of the program
 5.4 established under ~~this paragraph (a)~~, clause (6). School districts may cooperate with the
 5.5 commissioner and volunteer instructors to provide space for the classroom portion of the
 5.6 training. The commissioner shall consult with the commissioner of public safety in regard
 5.7 to training program subject matter and performance testing that leads to the certification of
 5.8 snowmobile operators.

5.9 ~~(7)~~ (c) The operator of any snowmobile involved in an accident resulting in injury
 5.10 requiring medical attention or hospitalization to or death of any person or total damage to
 5.11 an extent of \$500 or more, shall forward a written report of the accident to the commissioner
 5.12 on ~~such~~ a form as prescribed by the commissioner ~~shall prescribe~~. If the operator is killed
 5.13 or is unable to file a report due to incapacitation, any peace officer investigating the accident
 5.14 shall file the accident report within ten business days.

5.15 Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 84.87, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

5.16 Subdivision 1. **Operation on streets and highways.** (a) No person shall operate a
 5.17 snowmobile upon the roadway, shoulder, or inside bank or slope of any trunk, county
 5.18 state-aid, or county highway in this state and, in the case of a divided trunk or county
 5.19 highway, on the right-of-way between the opposing lanes of traffic, except as provided in
 5.20 sections 84.81 to 84.90. No person shall operate a snowmobile within the right-of-way of
 5.21 any trunk, county state-aid, or county highway between the hours of one-half hour after
 5.22 sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, except on the right-hand side of such right-of-way
 5.23 and in the same direction as the highway traffic on the nearest lane of the roadway adjacent
 5.24 thereto. No snowmobile shall be operated at any time within the right-of-way of any interstate
 5.25 highway or freeway within this state.

5.26 (b) Notwithstanding any provision of paragraph (a) to the contrary:

5.27 (1) under conditions prescribed by the commissioner of transportation, the commissioner
 5.28 of transportation may allow two-way operation of snowmobiles on either side of the trunk
 5.29 highway right-of-way where the commissioner of transportation determines that two-way
 5.30 operation will not endanger users of the trunk highway or riders of the snowmobiles using
 5.31 the trail;

5.32 (2) under conditions prescribed by a local road authority as defined in section 160.02,
 5.33 subdivision 25, the road authority may allow two-way operation of snowmobiles on either
 5.34 side of the right-of-way of a street or highway under the road authority's jurisdiction, where

6.1 the road authority determines that two-way operation will not endanger users of the street
6.2 or highway or riders of the snowmobiles using the trail;

6.3 (3) the commissioner of transportation under clause (1) and the local road authority
6.4 under clause (2) shall notify the commissioner of natural resources and the local law
6.5 enforcement agencies responsible for the streets or highways of the locations of two-way
6.6 snowmobile trails authorized under this paragraph; and

6.7 (4) two-way snowmobile trails authorized under this paragraph shall be posted for
6.8 two-way operation at the authorized locations.

6.9 (c) A snowmobile may make a direct crossing of a street or highway at any hour of the
6.10 day provided:

6.11 (1) the crossing is made at an angle of approximately 90 degrees to the direction of the
6.12 highway and at a place where no obstruction prevents a quick and safe crossing;

6.13 (2) the snowmobile is brought to a complete stop before crossing the shoulder or main
6.14 traveled way of the highway;

6.15 (3) the driver yields the right-of-way to all oncoming traffic which constitutes an
6.16 immediate hazard;

6.17 (4) in crossing a divided highway, the crossing is made only at an intersection of such
6.18 highway with another public street or highway or at a safe location approved by the road
6.19 authority;

6.20 (5) if the crossing is made between the hours of one-half hour after sunset to one-half
6.21 hour before sunrise or in conditions of reduced visibility, only if both front and rear lights
6.22 are on; and

6.23 (6) a snowmobile may be operated upon a bridge, other than a bridge that is part of the
6.24 main traveled lanes of an interstate highway, when required for the purpose of avoiding
6.25 obstructions to travel when no other method of avoidance is possible; provided the
6.26 snowmobile is operated in the extreme right-hand lane, the entrance to the roadway is made
6.27 within 100 feet of the bridge and the crossing is made without undue delay.

6.28 (d) No snowmobile shall be operated upon a public street or highway unless it is equipped
6.29 with at least one headlamp, one tail lamp, each of minimum candlepower as prescribed by
6.30 rules of the commissioner, reflector material of a minimum area of 16 square inches mounted
6.31 on each side forward of the handle bars, and with brakes each of which shall conform to
6.32 standards prescribed by rule of the commissioner pursuant to the authority vested in the

7.1 commissioner by section 84.86, and each of which shall be subject to approval of the
7.2 commissioner of public safety.

7.3 (e) A snowmobile may be operated upon a public street or highway other than as provided
7.4 by paragraph (c) in an emergency during the period of time when and at locations where
7.5 snow upon the roadway renders travel by automobile impractical.

7.6 (f) All provisions of chapters 169 and 169A shall apply to the operation of snowmobiles
7.7 upon streets and highways, except for those relating to required equipment, and except those
7.8 which by their nature have no application. Section 169.09 applies to the operation of
7.9 snowmobiles anywhere in the state or on the ice of any boundary water of the state.

7.10 (g) Any sled, trailer, or other device being towed by a snowmobile must be equipped
7.11 with reflective materials as required by rule of the commissioner.

7.12 **Sec. 8. REGISTRATION DECAL FORMAT TRANSITION.**

7.13 Separately displaying registration numbers is not required when a larger-format
7.14 registration decal as provided under Minnesota Statutes, section 84.82, subdivision 2, is
7.15 displayed according to Minnesota Statutes, section 84.82, subdivision 3b. Snowmobiles
7.16 displaying valid but older, smaller-format registration decals must display the separate
7.17 registration numbers. Persons may obtain duplicate registration decals in the new, larger
7.18 format, when available, without being required to display the separate registration numbers.

7.19 **Sec. 9. REPEALER.**

7.20 Minnesota Rules, parts 6100.5000, subparts 3, 4, and 5; and 6100.5700, subpart 4, are
7.21 repealed.

6100.5000 SNOWMOBILE REGISTRATION AND DISPLAY OF NUMBERS.

Subp. 3. **Affixation of number.** The registration number of the snowmobile, shown on the registration certificate, shall be affixed to the snowmobile and maintained in a clear, legible manner. On all machines made after June 30, 1972, and sold in Minnesota, such registration number shall be affixed in the space provided therefor in accordance with part 6100.5700, subpart 4. On all other machines it shall be affixed on each side of the cowling on the upper half of the machine, as follows.

[Image Not Shown]

Subp. 4. **Description of decal or number; lost or destroyed number or decal.** All letters and numbers shall be of a color which will contrast with the surface to which applied, and shall be at least three inches high and three-eighths inch stroke. When any previously affixed registration number or decal is destroyed or lost, a duplicate shall be affixed in the manner shown above. The registration number shall remain the same if renewed by July 1 following the expiration date.

Subp. 5. **General prohibition.** No person shall operate or transport, and no person shall permit the operation of, a snowmobile within this state which does not have its registration number and unexpired decal affixed in the form and manner required by this part, unless the owner is exempted from the registration requirements of this state by Minnesota Statutes, section 84.82.

6100.5700 REQUIRED EQUIPMENT.

Subp. 4. **Snowmobile registration number affixation.** All snowmobiles made after June 30, 1972, and sold in Minnesota, shall be designed and made to provide an area on which to affix the snowmobile registration number at the following location and of the following dimensions:

A. A clear area shall be provided on each side of the cowling or pan with the minimum size of 3-1/2 inches vertical by 11 inches horizontal.

B. It shall be a minimum of 12 inches from the ground when the machine is resting on a hard surface.