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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 1121 (as introduced 5-9-12)
Sponsor: Senator Bruce Caswell
Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 6-1-12

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to revise the definition of "implement of husbandry", and specify that the terms "trailer" and "semi-trailer" would not include an implement of husbandry.

Currently, "implement of husbandry" means a vehicle that is a farm tractor, a vehicle designed to be drawn by a farm tractor or an animal, a vehicle that harvests farm products directly, or a vehicle that applies fertilizer, spray, or seeds directly to a farm field. The bill would delete this definition. Instead, the term would mean a vehicle or trailer designed or adapted for the primary function of serving agricultural, horticultural, or livestock operations. The term would include a farm tractor, self-propelled application-type vehicle, farm wagon, farm trailer, a vehicle or trailer adapted for lifting or carrying another implement of husbandry, or any substantially similar equipment used to transport products necessary for agricultural production.

The bill provides that the terms "trailer" and "semi-trailer" would not include any implement of husbandry. (Both of those terms mean a vehicle with or without motive power, other than a pole-trailer, designed for carrying people or property and for being drawn by a motor vehicle. A trailer is constructed so that none of its weight rests upon the towing vehicle. A semi-trailer is constructed so that some of its weight and that of its load rests upon or is carried by another vehicle.)

An implement of husbandry is exempt from the Code's vehicle registration and certificate of title provisions and size, weight, and load restrictions. In addition, an implement of husbandry may be operated on a highway in excess of the Code's maximum vehicle width without a special wide load permit. An implement of husbandry must comply with prescribed requirements regarding identification as a slow-moving vehicle, the lighting and marking of agricultural equipment on highways, and reflective devices.

MCL 257.21 et al.

Legislative Analyst: Julie Cassidy

FISCAL IMPACT

Section 216 of the Michigan Vehicle Code provides for the exemption of certain motor vehicles, trailers, and mobile equipment from the registration and certificate of title provisions of the Code. Vehicles classified as "implements of husbandry" are specifically exempted under Section 216.

By redefining "implement of husbandry", the bill would extend the exemption to certain adapted trailers, semi-trailers, and trailers. Currently, most trailers are required to pay a one-time, permanent registration fee ranging from \$75 to \$300 depending on the weight of the trailer or semi-trailer. Under the bill, trailers that were considered an implement of husbandry would become exempt from the required registration fee. The result would be a loss in revenue for the Michigan Transportation Fund from the uncollected fee. The amount of lost revenue is indeterminate and would depend on the number of affected trailers.

Since 2003, the required one-time fee has been paid for most trailers currently used as an implement of husbandry. The bill would apply only to any newly purchased trailer that would be registered for the first time; thus, the potential loss in revenue should not be substantial.

Fiscal Analyst: Joe Carrasco

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.