

HOUSE BILL NO. 414
INTRODUCED BY J. BALYEAT

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING A GRACE PERIOD FOR REGISTRATION OF MOTORBOATS, SAILBOATS, PERSONAL WATERCRAFT, SNOWMOBILES, AND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES; AUTHORIZING THE OPERATION OF A MOTORBOAT, SAILBOAT, PERSONAL WATERCRAFT, SNOWMOBILE, OR OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE DURING THE GRACE PERIOD; AMENDING SECTIONS 23-2-511, 23-2-512, 23-2-616, 23-2-618, AND 23-2-817, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 23-2-511, MCA, is amended to read:

"23-2-511. Operation of unnumbered motorboats prohibited -- display of decals. (1) Every Subject to 23-2-512(6), every motorboat on the waters of this state, propelled by a motor or an engine of any description, must be properly numbered and display valid license decals. ~~No~~ Subject to 23-2-512(6), a person may not operate or give permission for the operation of any motorboat on ~~such~~ the waters of this state unless the motorboat is numbered and displays valid license decals in accordance with this part, with applicable federal law, or with a federally approved numbering system of another state and unless:

(a) the certificate of number assigned to the motorboat is in full force and effect;

(b) the identifying number set forth in the certificate of number and the valid license decals are displayed on ~~such~~ the motorboat; and

(c) a temporary permit has been obtained from the county in which the boat is being operated if that county requires a temporary permit for out-of-state motorboats, as provided in 7-16-2121.

(2) Upon transfer of ownership of a motorboat from a registered boat dealer or manufacturer, the transferred motorboat may be operated on the waters of this state for 30 consecutive calendar days immediately following the transfer of ownership without displaying the numbers and license decal required by subsection (1) provided that when the motorboat is operated during those 30 consecutive calendar days, a bill of sale or other evidence of transfer reciting the date of the transfer of ownership is retained in the motorboat and is exhibited to a warden or other officer upon request."

Section 2. Section 23-2-512, MCA, is amended to read:

"23-2-512. Identification number. (1) The owner of each motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft requiring numbering by this state shall file an application for number in the office of the county treasurer in the county where the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft is owned, on forms prepared and furnished by the department of justice. The application must be signed by the owner of the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft and be accompanied by a fee of \$3.50. Any alteration, change, or false statement contained in the application will render the certificate of number void. Upon receipt of the application in approved form, the county treasurer shall issue to the applicant a certificate of number prepared and furnished by the department of justice, stating the number assigned to the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft and the name and address of the owner.

(2) The applicant, upon the filing of the application, shall pay to the county treasurer the fee in lieu of tax required for a motorboat 10 feet in length or longer, a sailboat 12 feet in length or longer, or a personal watercraft for the current year of certification before the application for certification or recertification may be accepted by the county treasurer.

(3) If the ownership of a motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft changes, a new application form with the certification fee must be filed within a reasonable time with the county treasurer and a new certificate of number assigned in the same manner as provided for in an original assignment of number.

(4) If an agency of the United States government has in force a comprehensive system of identification numbering for motorboats in the United States, the numbering system employed pursuant to this part by the department of justice must be in conformity.

(5) Every certificate of number and the license decals assigned under this part continue in effect for a period not to exceed 1 year unless terminated or discontinued in accordance with the provisions of this part. Certificates of number and license decals must show the date of expiration and may be renewed by the owner in the same manner provided for in the initial securing of the certificate.

(6) Certificates of number expire on December 31 of each year and may not be in effect unless renewed under this part. The owner of a motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft registered under the provisions of this section may operate the boat between January 1 and February 15 without displaying the certificate of number or license decals for the current year if during that period the owner displays upon the boat the certificate of number or license decals assigned for the previous year. A certificate of number renewed by February 15 may not be considered delinquent.

(7) In the event of a transfer of ownership, the purchaser shall furnish the county treasurer notice within

a reasonable time of the acquisition of all or any part of the purchaser's interest, other than the creation of a security interest, in a motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft numbered in this state or of the loss, theft, destruction, or abandonment of the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft. The transfer, loss, theft, destruction, or abandonment terminates the certificate of number for the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft. Recovery from theft or transfer of a part interest that does not affect the owner's right to operate the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft does not terminate the certificate of number.

(8) A holder of a certificate of number shall notify the county treasurer within a reasonable time if the holder's address no longer conforms to the address appearing on the certificate and shall furnish the county treasurer with the new address. The department of justice may provide by rule for the surrender of the certificate bearing the former address and its replacement with a certificate bearing the new address or the alteration of an outstanding certificate to show the new address of the holder.

(9) (a) The number assigned must be painted on or attached to each outboard side of the forward half of the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft or, if there are no sides, at a corresponding location on both outboard sides of the foredeck of the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft. The number assigned must read from left to right in Arabic numerals and block characters of good proportion at least 3 inches tall excluding border or trim of a color that contrasts with the color of the background and be so maintained as to be clearly visible and legible. The number may not be placed on the obscured underside of the flared bow where it cannot be easily seen from another vessel or ashore. Numerals, letters, or devices other than those used in connection with the identifying number issued may not be placed in the proximity of the identifying number. Numerals, letters, or devices that might interfere with the ready identification of the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft by its identifying number may not be carried in a manner that interferes with the motorboat's, sailboat's, or personal watercraft's identification. A number other than the number and license decal assigned to a motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft or granted reciprocity under this part may not be painted, attached, or otherwise displayed on either side of the forward half of the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft.

(b) The certificate of number must be pocket size and available to federal, state, or local law enforcement officers at all reasonable times for inspection on the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft whenever the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft is on waters of this state.

(c) Boat liveries are not required to have the certificate of number on board each motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft, but a rental agreement must be carried on board livery motorboats, sailboats, or personal watercraft in place of the certificate of number.

(10) Fees, other than the fee in lieu of tax, collected under this section must be transmitted to the

department of revenue, as provided in 15-1-504, for deposit in the state general fund.

(11) An owner of a motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft shall within a reasonable time notify the department of justice, giving the motorboat's, sailboat's, or personal watercraft's identifying number and the owner's name when the motorboat, sailboat, or personal watercraft is transferred, lost, destroyed, or abandoned or within 60 days after a change of the state of principal use or if a motorboat becomes documented as a vessel of the United States."

Section 3. Section 23-2-616, MCA, is amended to read:

"23-2-616. Registration and decals -- application and issuance -- use of certain fees. (1) Except for a snowmobile registered under 23-2-621 and except as provided in 23-2-618, a snowmobile may not be operated on public lands by any person in Montana unless it has been registered and there is displayed in a conspicuous place on both sides of the cowl a decal as visual proof that the fee in lieu of property tax has been paid on it for the current year and the immediately previous year as required by 15-16-202.

(2) Application for registration must be made to the county treasurer upon forms to be furnished by the department of justice for this purpose, which may be obtained at the county treasurer's office in the county where the owner resides. The application must contain the following information:

- (a) the name and address of the owner;
- (b) the certificate of ownership number;
- (c) the make of the snowmobile;
- (d) the model name of the snowmobile;
- (e) the year of manufacture;
- (f) a statement evidencing payment of the fee in lieu of property tax as required by 15-16-202; and
- (g) other information that the department of justice may require.

(3) The application must be accompanied by a decal-registration fee of \$6.50, and, if the snowmobile has previously been registered, by the registration certificate for the most recent year in which the snowmobile was registered. The treasurer shall sign the application and issue a registration receipt that must contain information considered necessary by the department of justice and a listing of fees paid. The owner shall retain possession of the registration receipt until it is surrendered to the county treasurer for reregistration or to a purchaser or subsequent owner pursuant to a transfer of ownership.

(4) The county treasurer shall forward the signed application to the department of justice and shall issue to the applicant a decal in the style and design prescribed by the department of justice and of a different color

than the preceding year, numbered in sequence.

(5) The county treasurer may not accept any application under this section until the applicant has paid the decal-registration fee and the fee in lieu of property tax on the snowmobile for the current year and the immediately previous year as required by 15-16-202.

(6) All money collected from payment of decal-registration fees and all interest accruing from use of this money must be forwarded to the department of revenue, as provided in 15-1-504, for deposit in the state general fund.

(7) The county treasurer shall credit all fees in lieu of tax collected on snowmobiles to the state general fund."

Section 4. Section 23-2-618, MCA, is amended to read:

"23-2-618. Application for registration and decals to be made annually -- grace periods. Application must be made annually to the county treasurer for registration and the issuance of a decal indicating that the fee in lieu of property tax has been paid for the current year. All registrations and decals expire on June 30 of each year. The owner of a snowmobile registered under the provisions of this section may operate the snowmobile without the registration and decal for the current year between July 1 and August 15 if during that period the owner possesses the registration receipt and decal for the previous year. A snowmobile registered by August 15 is not considered to be delinquent for registration purposes."

Section 5. Section 23-2-817, MCA, is amended to read:

"23-2-817. Registration fee -- application and issuance -- disposition. (1) Each off-highway vehicle is subject to an annual registration fee of \$2.

(2) The county treasurer shall collect the annual fee when the fee in lieu of tax is collected.

(3) Application for registration must be made to the county treasurer of the county in which the owner resides, on a form furnished by the department of justice for that purpose. The application must contain:

- (a) the name and home mailing address of the owner;
- (b) the certificate of ownership number;
- (c) the name of the manufacturer of the off-highway vehicle;
- (d) the model number or name;
- (e) the year of manufacture;
- (f) a statement evidencing payment of the fee in lieu of property tax; and

(g) such other information as the department of justice may require.

(4) If the off-highway vehicle was previously registered, the application must be accompanied by the registration certificate for the most recent year in which it was registered. Upon payment of the registration fee, the county treasurer shall sign the application and issue a registration receipt, which must contain the information considered necessary by the department of justice and a listing of the fees paid. The owner shall retain possession of the registration receipt until it is surrendered to the county treasurer for reregistration or to a purchaser or subsequent owner pursuant to a transfer of ownership.

(5) All registration fees collected must be forwarded to the department of justice and deposited in the general fund.

(6) The owner of an off-highway vehicle registered under the provisions of this section may operate the off-highway vehicle without the registration receipt for the current year for 45 days after the registration is due if during that period the owner possesses the registration receipt for the previous year. An off-highway vehicle registered within the 45-day period is not considered to be delinquent for registration purposes."

NEW SECTION. Section 6. Effective date. [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

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