



Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association, Inc.

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON HOUSE BILL 2047

JUNE 18, 2014

Chairman Stern, Chairman Kirkland, members of the House Tourism and Recreational Development Committee, and staff. I am Liz Krug, the current President of the Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association (PSSA).

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on the issues concerning HB 2047.

PSSA was founded in 1969. Its mission is to enhance the Pennsylvania snowmobiling experience of family recreation, fellowship, and tourism, by striving to assure high quality trails and safe, environmentally-responsible recreational use of snowmobiles. PSSA and its member clubs do more than just snowmobile.

During its forty-five years of existence, PSSA has enjoyed a working relationship with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and with various regional and state tourism organizations, such as the Pennsylvania Association of Travel and Tourism. These relationships are very important in promoting the sport of snowmobiling, increasing outdoor tourism, and advancing the economy in the Commonwealth. The Association also acts as a liaison with fifty-five plus (55+) member clubs. PSSA and its members donate their time and talents to help promote snowmobiling on state, federal, and private land. They volunteer to help

maintain and groom over 3000 miles of trails on state and national forest land, such as the Allegheny National Forest (ANF), and approximately 2500 miles of trails on private land open to the public. Other valuable services our Association provides to promote the sport include writing grant applications to help pay for the cost of grooming and maintaining trails, producing a Power Sport Show which includes ATVs, motorcycles, etc., and supporting snowmobile safety classes. PSSA also periodically conducts economic impact studies. (The current economic significance of snowmobile recreation in the State is approximately \$232,000,000.) Its publications, press releases, and alerts keep the general snowmobiling public aware of state and national issues and laws.

PSSA is a member of the American Council of Snowmobile Associations (ACSA). ACSA researches current snowmobile issues, and keeps PSSA informed of issues related to both snowmobiles and ATVs. This information is shared with all clubs and PSSA members, including our legislators via our monthly publication, "The Keystone Snowmobiler". The general public can access information on our public website, www.pasnow.org. This valuable membership in ACSA is paid for by the PSSA members and not the PA Snowmobile /ATV Fund.

The American Council of Snowmobile Associations is well known for its work to keep ACCESS to all trails open, including ATV trails. It recently established the Legal Defense Fund whose purpose is to provide financial help to those organizations who are directly involved in lawsuits that would deny or greatly diminish access to trails. The International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (ISMA) also supports the work of ACSA and all state associations.

HB 2047 aims to split the ATV/Snowmobile Fund into two separate accounts. It is difficult to speak on this issue because I am not certain how DCNR accounts for its spending. I suspect there are projects where multiple stakeholders benefit from the work done. How does one split the costs of these projects? A snowmobile trail may cross over or run parallel to a DCNR road or share a trail with another user group. Who pays? PSSA supports transparency in relationship to spending funds. Other states have combined their ATV/Snowmobile funds. I would like to point out, though, that the ATV registration numbers are misleading. Many owners use them on their own land or camps and not in ATV parks or on trails.

PSSA has indicated for several years a need to increase the Snowmobile Registration Fee. Clubs need help to maintain over 2500 miles of trails across PA and, unlike several other states, PA clubs are not currently reimbursed for their many hours of trail maintenance and grooming activities each year. They must depend on PSSA to write grants and disburse limited funds via various grant opportunities. These grants are neither large nor consistent, and politics play a part in many decisions. This presents planning problems for both clubs and PSSA.

The potential effects of HB 2047 reach far beyond the separation of the ATV/Snowmobile Fund and the division of remaining monies in the account.

Therefore, PSSA makes the following recommendations:

- ❖ Establish a state-wide snowmobile program which would include a formal partnership between DCNR and the Pennsylvania State

Snowmobile Association. This partnership would include, but not be limited to, the funding of the trail maintenance and grooming program, signage, and promotion of the sport.

- ❖ Develop shared, multi-use, year-round trails that will be paid and maintained by all user groups.
- ❖ Add the President of the Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association to the distribution list of all audit and financial reports.
- ❖ Encourage the ATV users group to contribute to the PA Powersport Shows and to the American Council of Snowmobile Association's Legal Defense Fund.

In conclusion, I'd like to mention that I have an ATV (my second one) in addition to a snowmobile. I would like to see the ATV and Snowmobile groups work together to promote both sports. Together we can develop trails which are cost-efficient and effectively managed.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Liz Krug

President

Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association www.pasnow.org

References

"Keystone Snowmobiler", Hartman Publishing for PSSA:

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American Council of Snowmobile Associations: www.snowmobilers.org

International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association:

www.snowmobile.org