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WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Senate Bill 417

January 7, 2016

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. Thank you for taking the time to hear Senate Bill 417 this morning.

Under a provision of Act 377, the Implements of Husbandry bill passed last session, agricultural vehicles are allowed to cross a highway or travel short distances without a permit while conducting operations. This allowance for incidental movements helps accommodate vehicles that need to merely move from one field to the next or from one driveway to the next, traveling a distance of 0.5 miles or less on highways. This ensures farmers are not burdened with having to apply for permits just to cross into an adjacent field.

This bill extends this same accommodation to logging vehicles. It is not uncommon for a logger to be hired to log a piece of property that is bisected by a road. It also often happens that if a neighbor sees a logger working on an adjacent property, they may hire the logger to do work on their land as well. The incidental travel exception created in the bill would allow skidders, forwarders, harvesters, and wheeled feller bunchers, used for the purpose of logging, to operate unladen on a highway, without a permit, for distances of 0.5 miles or less.

Extending this exception will have much the same effect on loggers as it has had for farmers. Loggers will no longer face the threat of citation or the burden of permitting for operating in these short distances for the purpose of incidental travel.

I have introduced Senate Amendment 1 to clarify that these movements may only take place during daylight. Thank you again for your time and attention to this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions.

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