

3 bills are being proposed during the 2013 Legislative Session to regulate and/or fee studded tire use. I've commented and rated the effectiveness of these attempts to put the cost of studded tire damage on the persons responsible for these burdensome costs. State law requires that people who compromise our roads pay for any damage their responsible for. This law has never been enforced due to special interest (Les Schwab & the NW Tire Dealers Assoc.) influencing legislators and also blocking my attempt to ban studded tires, which is what really should be done.

Here Goes:

#### **House Bill 2277**

- Would direct the Oregon Department of Transportation to determine biennially the amount of damage from the use of studded tires, would require a permit to use studded tires and creates a traffic offense of operating motor vehicle with studded tires without a permit. The offense would be punishable by a maximum fine of \$500.

Sponsors: Rep. Mitch Greenlick, D-Portland

**Pros:** This has the potential to finally make users pay if and only if ODOT can realistically asses the true cost of studded tire damage. In conversations with Lucy Moore, head of ODOT's Maintenance she told me it's probably "\$500,000,000 in damage every year". If they use the "we repair \$11 million in damage every year", that's not the costs, that just what they spend. They've backlogged over a Billion dollars in studded tire damaged road maintenance. As a skier I buy a Snow-Park permit for \$25 and cause no damage to the roads, it's time studded tires users started paying their way.

**Con:** It doesn't address the true necessity for studded tires, which is maybe 2 or 3 days a year but their on for 5 months of the year. Drivers from out of state wouldn't pay, yet their studs damage our roads too. The true solution is to ban them and force the last of the studded tire users to switch to modern studless snow and ice tires. They have proven to outperform studded tires in a wider range of winter driving conditions without the road damage and the safety issues regarding ruts. Doesn't say how deep the ruts should get before everyone's safety is compromised and the road should be repaired.

**Conclusion:** Of the three bills this has the greatest **potential** to make studded tire users pay for the damage they cause.

#### **House Bill 2278**

- Would impose a \$10 fee on tire dealers when they sell a new tire with studs or install studs in a tire.
- The bill would not apply to retractable studded tires.

Sponsors: Rep. Mitch Greenlick, D-Portland; Rep. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland; and Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, D-Beaverton.

**Pro:** At least studded tire users are being forced to pay something, not nothing.

**Con:** Does not charge the people who currently have studded tires, you can buy studs in Border States and not pay the state fee. Drivers from out of state wouldn't pay, yet their studs damage our roads too. Out of State truckers pay for using our roads and so should studded tire users. You can buy used studded tires on Craigslist and again avoid paying any fee. A \$10 fee doesn't even come close to paying for the damage to our

infrastructure. Retractable studded tires are studded tires and should be included in the bill. They can be put out for the 5 months causing infrastructure damage.

**Conclusion:** This has too many drawbacks to even be considered, regardless of the fact that it wouldn't even come close to paying for the damage from studded tire use.

### **House Bill 2397**

- Would impose a fee on tire dealers when they sell a new tire with studs or install studs in a tire. Amount of fee is to be determined.
- The bill would not apply to retractable studded tires.

Sponsors: Rep. Brad Witt, D-Clatskanie; Rep. Jules Bailey, D-Portland; Rep. Peter Buckley, D-Ashland; Rep. Chris Harker, D-Beaverton; Rep. Paul Holvey, D-Eugene; Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, D-Portland.

**Pro:** Again, at least studded tire users are being asked to pay something, not nothing. If the fee were \$300 or \$400 (the cost of studless tires) then it has potential for people to choose something other than road damaging studded tires

**Con:** Again, does not charge the people who currently have studded tires, you can buy studs in Border States and not pay the state fee. You can buy used studded tires on Craigslist and again avoid paying any fee. Drivers from out of state wouldn't pay, yet their studs damage our roads too. Retractable studded tires are studded tires and should be included in the bill. . Since the Transportation Committee couldn't pass a \$3 per tire fee years ago, I don't out much hope that a realistic fee would pass.

**Conclusion:** Since the chance of getting a realistic fee this bill doesn't address the issue of damage from studded tires and the cost to repair the roads.