

No. 77. An act relating to designating skiing and snowboarding as the official winter state sports.

(H.365)

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

In recognition of the importance that sports and fitness can play in the personal lives of Vermonters and in the economic well-being of the state, the general assembly finds:

(1) The history of skiing and snowboarding is heavily linked to Vermont.

(2) In 1934, the country's first ski area opened near Woodstock when the first rope tow ski lift was installed on Clinton Gilbert's farm. This was followed by many other historical Vermont firsts in the ski industry, including the nation's first ski race which was held on Mount Mansfield in 1934, the nation's first J-bar lift which was installed at Bromley Ski Area in 1936, the nation's first ski patrol which was established at Stowe Ski Area in 1936, the nation's first T-bar lift which was installed at Pico Peak Ski Area in 1940, and the nation's first major chair lift which was installed at the Stowe Ski Area in 1940.

(3) In 1938, C. Minot Dole founded the National Ski Patrol in Vermont. Dole later used the National Ski Patrol model to convince the U.S. Army to activate a division of American mountain soldiers on skis, known as the 10th

Mountain Division. Approximately 240 Vermonters served in the famed winter warfare division during World War II, with a dozen killed in action in the battle against the Germans in the Italian Alps.

(4) In 1952, Rutland's Andrea Mead-Lawrence, whose parents ran Pico Mountain, became the first American woman to win two Olympic gold medals in skiing. Stowe's Billy Kidd won the silver medal at the 1964 Innsbruck Olympics and the gold and bronze medals at the 1970 World Championships. The skiing Cochrans—Barbara Ann, Lindy, Marilyn, and Bobby—from Richmond dominated the world racing scene in the 1960s and 1970s, with Barbara Ann winning the gold medal at the 1972 winter Olympics. Nordic skier Bill Koch, from Brattleboro, skied in four Olympics—1976, 1980, 1984, and 1992. Koch won the 1976 silver medal, a first for an American Nordic skier, a bronze medal in the 1982 Federation Internationale de Ski Nordic World Championships, and a bronze medal in the 1982 World Cup Championships. Most recently, at the 2010 Winter Olympics, Hannah Kearney of Norwich won the gold medal in the women's freestyle skiing event.

(5) Vermont is home to many public schools, academies, and colleges that are world-class training grounds for skiing and snowboarding.

(6) In 1982, the Suicide Six Resort in Pomfret was the first resort in the United States to allow snowboarding.

(7) In the 1980s, Vermont was the first state in the country to host what is now known as a snowboard park at the Sonnenberg Ski Area in Barnard.

(8) The U.S. Open for Snowboarding is held in Vermont. This event is the renowned first competition for snowboarding and offers an exciting opportunity to watch the world's best snowboarders exhibiting their skills.

(9) At the 2002 Winter Olympics, Ross Powers of Stratton and Kelly Clark of Dover won the men's and women's gold medal respectively in the snowboarding halfpipe event.

(10) The United States Olympic Committee named Hannah Teeter of Belmont, the 2006 Winter Olympics women's halfpipe gold medalist, as the 2006 Sportswoman of the Year, the top honor that the committee confers. She returned to the Winter Olympics in 2010 to win a silver medal in the women's halfpipe while Kelly Clark followed immediately behind her in the competition, capturing the bronze medal.

(11) The United States Olympic Committee named former United States Halfpipe Head Coach Bud Keene of Stowe the 2006 National Coach of the Year.

(12) In 1977, Vermonter Jake Burton Carpenter founded a snowboard company in his barn and perfected the technology to build snowboards. Today, this Burlington-based company is the worldwide leader in the manufacture and sale of snowboards. Jake and Donna Burton Carpenter were

inducted into the United States National Ski and Snowboarding Hall of Fame in 2007.

(13) Increasingly, there is an alarmingly high number of obese children in the United States. Both skiing and snowboarding promote healthy outdoor exercise for children, their parents, and people of all ages.

(14) Vermont historically ranks as the third largest ski and snowboard state, with over four million snowboarder and skier visits per year, and both sports are a critical part of our state's economy, heritage, and way of life.

(15) Designating skiing and snowboarding as the Vermont state sports will encourage individuals to travel to Vermont to ski and snowboard where they will patronize local hotels and restaurants and purchase Vermont goods and services.

Sec. 2. 1 V.S.A. § 516 is added to read:

§ 516. STATE SPORTS

The state winter sports shall be skiing and snowboarding.

Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This bill shall take effect on passage.

Approved: March 8, 2012