

House Bill 328

By: Representatives Watson of the 172nd, Rutledge of the 109th, Williams of the 168th, Tanner of the 9th, and Epps of the 144th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Title 32 and Chapter 6 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to highways and uniform rules of the road, respectively, so as to provide for the maximum length and load of vehicles; to provide for methods for determining load limits for vehicles utilizing idle reduction technology; to revise provisions for FlexAuto lanes; to clarify the meaning of certain flashing signals; to provide for rules of the road when approaching or entering an intersection with a signal in unactivated dark mode; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Title 32 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to highways, is amended by revising Code Section 32-6-24, relating to length of vehicles and loads, by revising subparagraph (b)(2)(C) as follows:

"(C) All other combinations of truck tractor-semitrailer or truck tractor-semitrailer-trailer operated on roads other than interstate or the NHS shall have an overall length that does not exceed 100 feet, unless signs are posted that indicate length restrictions. This maximum length shall include the federal allowance for automobile and boat transporter loads to overhang up to three feet over the front of the vehicle and overhang up to ~~four~~ six feet over the rear of the vehicle."

SECTION 2.

Said title is further amended in Code Section 32-6-27, relating to enforcement of load limits, by revising paragraph (3) of subsection (a) as follows:

"(3) Any vehicle that utilizes idle reduction technology shall have any penalty for violating Code Section 32-6-26, except for subsections (f) and (h), calculated by reducing from the actual gross weight, single axle weight, tandem axle weight, or the allowed weight on any group of two or more axles the manufacturer's certified weight of the idle

reducing technology or ~~400~~ 500 pounds, whichever is less. The operator of the vehicle shall present written certification from the manufacturer specifying the weight of the idle reducing technology and demonstrate that the idle reducing technology is fully functional at all times when so requested by any law enforcement officer or employee of the Department of Public Safety."

SECTION 3.

Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 32-9-4.1, relating to FlexAuto lanes, as follows:

"32-9-4.1.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term 'FlexAuto lane' means an area designated as a special lane of travel created by converting emergency lane and hard shoulder areas on the left or right side of an interstate highway or other road into a rush hour traffic lane for use by automobiles during certain hours.

(b) The department, with the approval of the board, is authorized to designate FlexAuto lanes on the state highway system for the purpose of improving traffic flow in and around areas with a history of traffic congestion.

(c) Any FlexAuto lane shall be appropriately striped and marked and shall have signage appropriate to indicate its nature, as determined by the department. The department may incorporate emergency havens, emergency ramps, or emergency parking pads into the design and creation of FlexAuto lanes, as determined appropriate by the department.

(d) The hours of usage of a FlexAuto lane shall be determined by the department, ~~not to exceed eight hours per day.~~

(e) It shall be unlawful for any person operating any motor vehicle to use a FlexAuto lane for purposes of travel other than emergency use outside the permitted hours of travel use, as determined and posted by the department. It shall be unlawful for any person operating any motor vehicle other than an automobile, motorcycle, or light truck to use a FlexAuto lane for purposes of travel other than emergency use at any time.

(f) Prior to implementing this Code section, the department shall, if necessary, seek to secure and implement any federal approvals, waivers, or other actions necessary or appropriate in order to implement this Code section without any loss or impairment of federal funding.

~~(g) FlexAuto lanes shall not be implemented at more than 80 separate locations in the state until such time as the department has completed a one-year test use of such lanes."~~

SECTION 4.

Chapter 6 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to uniform rules of the road, is amended by revising Code Section 40-6-23, relating to flashing red or yellow signals, as follows:

"40-6-23.

Flashing signal indications shall have the following meanings:

(1) **Flashing circular red (stop signal)** — When a red lens is illuminated with rapid intermittent flashes, drivers of vehicles shall stop at a clearly marked stop line or, if there is no stop line, before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection or, if there is no crosswalk, at the point nearest the intersecting roadway where the driver has a view of approaching traffic on the intersecting roadway before entering the intersection, and the right to proceed shall be subject to the rules applicable after making a stop at a stop sign;

(2) **Flashing circular yellow (caution signal)** — When a yellow lens is illuminated with rapid intermittent flashes, drivers of vehicles may proceed through the intersection or past such signal only with caution."

SECTION 5.

Said chapter is further amended in Code Section 40-6-70, relating to vehicles approaching or entering an intersection, by revising subsection (a) as follows:

"(a) When two vehicles approach or enter an intersection from different highways at approximately the same time, the driver of the vehicle on the left shall yield the right of way to the vehicle on the right, provided that when a vehicle approaches or enters an intersection with no stop signs or other traffic-control devices from a highway that terminates at the intersection, the driver of that vehicle shall yield the right of way to the other vehicle, whether the latter vehicle be on such driver's right or left. When two vehicles approach or enter an intersection with ~~an inoperative~~ a traffic light in unactivated dark mode, the driver of each vehicle shall be required to stop in the same manner as if a stop sign were facing in each direction at the intersection. Drivers shall not be required to stop if the traffic signal is properly signed as a pedestrian hybrid beacon or ramp meter and operating in the unactivated dark mode. When a flashing indication is given, the driver shall stop for the flashing red signal and exhibit caution while passing through a flashing yellow indication."

SECTION 6.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.