

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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117th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-1996

Legislative Document

No. 1687

S.P. 643

In Senate, January 11, 1996

An Act to Make Changes to the Motor Vehicle Laws.

Submitted by the Department of Public Safety pursuant to Joint Rule 24.
Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "May M. Ross".

MAY M. ROSS
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator STEVENS of Androscoggin.
Cosponsored by Senator: CASSIDY of Washington, Representatives: BOUFFARD of Lewiston, DEXTER of Kingfield, DRISCOLL of Calais, FARNUM of South Berwick, HEINO of Boothbay, LINDAHL of Northport, O'GARA of Westbrook, PENDLETON of Scarborough, RICKER of Lewiston.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §501, sub-§1, as amended by PL 1995, c. 65, Pt. C, §3 and affected by Pt. A, §153 and Pt. C, §15, is further amended to read:

1. **Automobiles; pickup trucks.** The fee for an automobile or pickup truck used for the conveyance of passengers or interchangeably for passengers or property is \$22.

An automobile used for the conveyance of passengers or property is a "combination" vehicle and may be issued a special plate with the word "combination" instead of "Vacationland." A passenger vehicle used under contract with the State, a municipality or a school district to transport students must be designated as "combination." A vehicle owned or operated by parents or legal guardians is exempt from this subsection.

Commercial plates may not be issued for or displayed on an automobile.

The gross weight of a pickup truck or the combined gross weight of a pickup truck drawing a semitrailer registered as provided by this subsection may not exceed 6,000 pounds. ~~An owner of a pickup truck who operates the~~ A pickup truck with a gross weight in excess of 6,000 pounds or ~~the~~ a pickup truck drawing a semitrailer with a combined gross weight in excess of 6,000 pounds must ~~register the~~ be registered as a truck as provided in section 504.

Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §504, sub-§5, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

5. **Truck or truck tractor and semitrailer.** In computing fees for a combination of truck or truck tractor and semitrailer, the vehicle to be registered for gross weight is the truck or truck tractor and the rate is the same as for a truck of similar gross vehicle weight.

Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §1752, sub-§1, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

1. **Registered or inspected in another state.** A motor vehicle owned and registered in another state and a motor vehicle registered in this State displaying a valid certificate of inspection from another state or a federally approved commercial vehicle inspection program;

Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §1905-A is enacted to read:

§1905-A. Turn signal

1. Requirement. Except as provided in subsection 3, a motor vehicle, trailer or semitrailer must be equipped with electric flashing turn signal lamps. A motor vehicle must emit white or amber light from the turn signals to the front of the vehicle and a motor vehicle, trailer or semitrailer must emit amber or red light from the turn signals to the rear of the vehicle.

2. Vehicles physically connected. When a vehicle that is being operated is physically connected to another vehicle, only the last vehicle must carry turn signals to the rear.

3. Vehicles manufactured without turn signal. Automobiles and trucks less than 80 inches in width, manufactured or assembled prior to January 1, 1953 need not be equipped with electric turn signal lamps.

4. Exception for farm tractors. This section does not apply to unregistered farm tractors.

Sec. 5. 29-A MRSA §1953, sub-§2, ¶A, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

A. A truck with a registered gross vehicle weight of 6,000 pounds or less;

Sec. 6. 29-A MRSA §2358, sub-§§1 and 2, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, are amended to read:

1. Travel to scales. If scales are not available, the officer may require that an operator of a vehicle go to the nearest ~~public-scales~~ location capable of weighing the vehicle, if the travel does not increase by more than 5 miles the distance that the operator may ~~reasonably~~ travel to reach ~~its~~ the operator's destination.

2. Weighing points. The Chief of the State Police may designate weighing points ~~where--public--stationary--scales--are located.~~

A weighing point must have signs:

A. Not less than 500 feet from approaching traffic;

B. Bearing the words "State Police Truck Check - All Trucks Stop"; and

2 C. Displaying flashing yellow lights, which must operate
when the weighing station is open.

4 The placement of signs is prima facie evidence that these signs
were displayed in accordance with this section.

6 An operator of a vehicle subject to GVW restrictions who fails to
8 stop at the weighing point when the signs are operating, unless
otherwise directed by a state police officer, commits a traffic
10 infraction for which a forfeiture not to exceed \$500 may be
adjudged.

12 **Sec. 7. 29-A MRSA §2360, sub-§§4 and 5**, as enacted by PL 1993,
14 c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, are amended to read:

16 **4. Minor gross weight violations.** ~~It is not a violation~~
The fine is waived if the allowable gross vehicle weight is
18 exceeded by less than 500 pounds multiplied by the number of
axles less one. If the allowable gross weight is exceeded by
20 more than 500 but less than 1,000 pounds multiplied by the number
of axles less one, the fine is reduced by 50%.

22 **5. Minor axle weight violations.** ~~It is not a violation~~ The
24 fine is waived if the allowable weight on an axle or group of
axles is exceeded by less than 1,000 pounds. If the excess is
26 less than 1,000 pounds plus 500 pounds multiplied by the number
of axles in the axle group, the fine is reduced by 66%. If the
28 excess is less than 1,000 pounds plus 1,000 pounds multiplied by
the number of axles in the axle group, the fine is reduced by 50%.

30 32 STATEMENT OF FACT

34 This bill accomplishes the following.

36 1. It makes it clear that a pickup truck must be registered
as a truck if the combined gross weight of the pickup truck plus
38 a towed trailer or semitrailer exceeds 6,000 pounds.

40 2. It makes the fee schedule that is currently applicable
to a truck tractor and semitrailer also applicable to a truck and
42 semitrailer.

44 3. It corrects a language error regarding inspection of a
motor vehicle that was previously registered in another state.

46 4. It requires vehicles to be equipped with turn signals.
48

2 5. It makes it clear that a truck registered for more than
6,000 pounds must have splash guards.

4 6. It deletes references to public scales for weighing
vehicles. The State Police do not use "public" scales.

6
8 7. It makes it clear that the gross vehicle and axle weight
forgivenesses are not intended to increase allowable gross
vehicle and axle weights.
10