

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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128th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2017

Legislative Document

No. 172

H.P. 128

House of Representatives, January 19, 2017

An Act To Improve Officer Safety at Roadside Incidents

Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative HARRINGTON of Sanford.
Cosponsored by Senator VOLK of Cumberland and
Representatives: BATTLE of South Portland, CEBRA of Naples, COREY of Windham,
GERRISH of Lebanon, McLEAN of Gorham, ORDWAY of Standish, WARREN of
Hallowell, Senator: COLLINS of York.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶D**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 183, §2, is
3 further amended to read:

4 D. Except as provided in this paragraph, a vehicle may not be equipped with or
5 display a blue light.

6 (1) Emergency lights used on the following vehicles must emit a blue light or a
7 combination of blue and white light: a police vehicle, except that a police vehicle
8 may also use red emergency lights under paragraph F; a Department of
9 Corrections vehicle as described in subsection 1, paragraph B, subparagraph (6);
10 a vehicle operated by a chief of police, a sheriff or a deputy sheriff; and a vehicle
11 operated by a qualified deputy sheriff or other qualified individual performing
12 court security-related functions and services.

13 (2) Emergency lights used on an ambulance, an emergency medical service
14 vehicle, a fire department vehicle or a hazardous material response vehicle may
15 include one blue light mounted facing toward the rear of the vehicle so that the
16 light is primarily visible to approaching traffic from the rear only.

17 (3) The taillight of a vehicle, or replica of a vehicle, manufactured prior to 1952
18 and registered under section 457, may contain a blue or purple insert of not more
19 than one inch in diameter.

20 (4) Blue interior auxiliary lighting or dash lighting may be used on any vehicle if
21 no portion of the beam of light is visible at a height of 42 inches above a surface
22 parallel with the level surface on which the vehicle stands at a distance of 20 feet
23 from any part of the vehicle.

24 **Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶F**, as amended by PL 2015, c. 31, §2, is
25 further amended to read:

26 F. Only vehicles listed in this paragraph, rural mail vehicles as provided in paragraph
27 C, subparagraph (5) and school buses may be equipped with, display or use a red
28 auxiliary or emergency light.

29 (1) Emergency lights used on an ambulance, an emergency medical service
30 vehicle, a fire department vehicle, a fire vehicle, a rescue vehicle or a hazardous
31 material response vehicle must emit a red light or a combination of red and white
32 light.

33 (2) The municipal officers or a municipal official designated by the municipal
34 officers, with the approval of the fire chief, may authorize an active member of a
35 municipal or volunteer fire department to use one red or combination red and
36 white flashing auxiliary light mounted in the windshield or on the dashboard at
37 the front of the vehicle or 2 flashing red or combination red and white auxiliary
38 lights mounted on the front of the vehicle above the front bumper and below the
39 hood and one red auxiliary light mounted in the rear window area. The light or
40 lights may be displayed but may be used only while the member is en route to or
41 at the scene of a fire or other emergency. A light mounted on the dashboard or in

1 the windshield must be shielded so that the emitted light does not interfere with
2 the operator's vision. The use of lights may be revoked at any time by the fire
3 chief.

4 (3) Members of an emergency medical service licensed by Maine Emergency
5 Medical Services may display and use on a vehicle red or combination red and
6 white flashing auxiliary lights and red auxiliary lights of the same proportion, in
7 the same location and under the same conditions as those permitted municipal
8 and volunteer firefighters, when authorized by the chief official of the emergency
9 medical service. The use of lights may be revoked at any time by the chief
10 official of the emergency medical service.

11 (4) A police vehicle may be equipped with, display and use red emergency
12 lights. The red emergency lights may comprise up to 50% of the emergency
13 lights used on the police vehicle.

14 **SUMMARY**

15 This bill allows police vehicles to use red emergency lights. The red emergency
16 lights may comprise up to 50% of the emergency lights used on the police vehicle.