

Senate Bill 188

By: Senators Hamrick of the 30th, Smith of the 52nd and Mullis of the 53rd

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 15 of Chapter 6 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to serious traffic offenses, so as to change provisions relating to punishment for the
3 offense of fleeing or attempting to elude a pursuing police vehicle or police officer; to
4 provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date and for applicability; to repeal
5 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Article 15 of Chapter 6 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
9 serious traffic offenses, is amended by striking Code Section 40-6-395, relating to fleeing or
10 attempting to elude a pursuing police vehicle or police officer, and inserting in its place a
11 new Code section to read as follows:

12 "40-6-395.

13 (a) It shall be unlawful for any driver of a vehicle willfully to fail or refuse to bring his or
14 her vehicle to a stop or otherwise to flee or attempt to elude a pursuing police vehicle or
15 police officer when given a visual or an audible signal to bring the vehicle to a stop. The
16 signal given by the police officer may be by hand, voice, emergency light, or siren. The
17 officer giving such signal shall be in uniform prominently displaying his or her badge of
18 office, and his or her vehicle shall be appropriately marked showing it to be an official
19 police vehicle.

20 (b)(1) Any person violating the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be
21 guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 and imprisonment for
22 not more than five years. ~~high and aggravated misdemeanor and:~~

23 ~~(A) Upon conviction shall be fined not less than \$500.00 nor more than \$5,000.00,~~
24 ~~which fine shall not be subject to suspension, stay, or probation and imprisoned for not~~
25 ~~less than ten days nor more than 12 months. Any period of such imprisonment in excess~~
26 ~~of ten days may, in the sole discretion of the judge, be suspended, stayed, or probated;~~

1 ~~(B) Upon the second conviction within a ten-year period of time, as measured from the~~
 2 ~~dates of previous arrests for which convictions were obtained to the date of the current~~
 3 ~~arrest for which a conviction is obtained, shall be fined not less than \$1,000.00 nor~~
 4 ~~more than \$5,000.00, which fine shall not be subject to suspension, stay, or probation~~
 5 ~~and imprisoned for not less than 30 days nor more than 12 months. Any period of such~~
 6 ~~imprisonment in excess of 30 days may, in the sole discretion of the judge, be~~
 7 ~~suspended, stayed, or probated; and for purposes of this paragraph, previous pleas of~~
 8 ~~nolo contendere accepted within such ten-year period shall constitute convictions; and~~
 9 ~~(C) Upon the third or subsequent conviction within a ten-year period of time, as~~
 10 ~~measured from the dates of previous arrests for which convictions were obtained to the~~
 11 ~~date of the current arrest for which a conviction is obtained, shall be fined not less than~~
 12 ~~\$2,500.00 nor more than \$5,000.00, which fine shall not be subject to suspension, stay,~~
 13 ~~or probation and imprisoned for not less than 90 days nor more than 12 months. Any~~
 14 ~~period of such imprisonment in excess of 90 days may, in the sole discretion of the~~
 15 ~~judge, be suspended, stayed, or probated; and for purposes of this paragraph, previous~~
 16 ~~pleas of nolo contendere accepted within such ten-year period shall constitute~~
 17 ~~convictions.~~

18 ~~(2) For the purpose of imposing a sentence under this subsection, a plea of nolo~~
 19 ~~contendere shall constitute a conviction.~~

20 ~~(3) If the payment of the fine required under paragraph (1) of this subsection will impose~~
 21 ~~an economic hardship on the defendant, the judge, at his or her sole discretion, may order~~
 22 ~~the defendant to pay such fine in installments and such order may be enforced through~~
 23 ~~a contempt proceeding or a revocation of any probation otherwise authorized by this~~
 24 ~~subsection.~~

25 ~~(4) Notwithstanding the limits set forth in any municipal charter, any municipal court of~~
 26 ~~any municipality shall be authorized to impose the punishments provided for in this~~
 27 ~~subsection upon a conviction of violating this subsection or upon conviction of violating~~
 28 ~~any ordinance adopting the provisions of this subsection.~~

29 ~~(5)(A)(2)(A)~~ Any person violating the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section
 30 who, while fleeing or attempting to elude a pursuing police vehicle or police officer in
 31 an attempt to escape arrest for a felony offense other than a violation of this chapter,
 32 operates his or her vehicle in excess of 30 miles an hour above the posted speed limit,
 33 strikes or collides with another vehicle or a pedestrian, flees in traffic conditions which
 34 place the general public at risk of receiving serious injuries, or leaves the state shall be
 35 guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of \$5,000.00 and imprisonment for not less than
 36 one year nor more than five years.

1 (B) Following adjudication of guilt or imposition of sentence for a violation of
2 subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the sentence shall not be suspended, probated,
3 deferred, or withheld, and the charge shall not be reduced to a lesser offense, merged
4 with any other offense, or served concurrently with any other offense.

5 (c) It shall be unlawful for a person:

6 (1) To impersonate a sheriff, deputy sheriff, state trooper, agent of the Georgia Bureau
7 of Investigation, agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, police officer, or any other
8 authorized law enforcement officer by using a motor vehicle or motorcycle designed,
9 equipped, or marked so as to resemble a motor vehicle or motorcycle belonging to any
10 federal, state, or local law enforcement agency; or

11 (2) Otherwise to impersonate any such law enforcement officer in order to direct, stop,
12 or otherwise control traffic."

13 **SECTION 2.**

14 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2003, and shall apply with respect to offenses
15 committed on or after that date. Any prior offense shall continue to be subject to prior law.

16 **SECTION 3.**

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