

House Bill 57

By: Representatives Powell of the 29th and Rice of the 51st

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 registration and licensing of motor vehicles, so as to define certain terms and fees; to change
3 certain provisions relating to motor carrier permitting; to designate the Department of
4 Revenue as the agency responsible for the administration of the federal Unified Carrier
5 Registration Act of 2005; to amend Title 46 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
6 relating to public utilities and public transportation, so as to repeal and reserve certain
7 provisions; to provide that identification requirements shall comply with the applicable
8 provisions of the federal Unified Carrier Registration Act of 2005; to provide for
9 promulgation of rules; to provide exemptions from application of provisions; to provide for
10 related matters; to provide for effective dates; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other
11 purposes.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

13 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

14 Chapter 2 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to registration and
15 licensing of motor vehicles, is amended by revising Code Section 40-2-1, relating to
16 definitions, as follows:

17 "40-2-1.

18 As used in this chapter, the term:

- 19 (1) 'Cancellation of vehicle registration' means the annulment or termination by formal
20 action of the department of a person's vehicle registration because of an error or defect
21 in the registration or because the person is no longer entitled to such registration. The
22 cancellation of registration is without prejudice and application for a new registration
23 may be made at any time after such cancellation.
- 24 (2) 'Commissioner' means the state revenue commissioner.
- 25 (3) 'Department' means the Department of Revenue.
- 26 (4) 'Motor carrier' means:

27 (A) Any entity subject to the terms of the Unified Carrier Registration Agreement
 28 pursuant to 49 U.S.C. Section 14504a whether engaged in interstate or intrastate
 29 commerce, or both; or

30 (B) Any entity defined by the commissioner, commissioner of public safety, or Public
 31 Service Commission who operates or controls commercial motor vehicles as defined
 32 in 49 C.F.R. Section 390.5, Title 46, or this chapter whether operated in interstate or
 33 intrastate commerce, or both.

34 (5) 'Operating authority' means the registration required by 49 U.S.C. Section 13902, 49
 35 C.F.R. Part 365, 49 C.F.R. Part 368, and 49 C.F.R. Section 392.9a.

36 (6) 'Regulatory compliance inspection' means the examination of facilities, property,
 37 buildings, vehicles, drivers, employees, cargo, packages, records, books, or supporting
 38 documentation kept or required to be kept in the normal course of motor carrier business
 39 or enterprise operations.

40 ~~(4)~~(7) 'Resident' means a person who has a permanent home or ~~abode~~ domicile in
 41 Georgia and to which, ~~whenever he or she is~~ having been absent, he or she has the
 42 intention of returning. For the purposes of this chapter, there is a rebuttable presumption
 43 that any person who, except for infrequent, brief absences, has been present in the state
 44 for 30 or more days is a resident.

45 ~~(5)~~(8) 'Revocation of vehicle registration' means the termination by formal action of the
 46 department of a vehicle registration, which registration shall not be subject to renewal
 47 or ~~restoration~~ reinstatement, except that an application for a new registration may be
 48 presented and acted upon by the department after the expiration of the applicable period
 49 of time prescribed by law.

50 ~~(6)~~(9) 'Suspension of vehicle registration' means the temporary withdrawal by formal
 51 action of the department of a vehicle registration, which temporary withdrawal shall be
 52 for a period specifically designated by the department."

53 **SECTION 2.**

54 Said title is further amended by inserting a new article to read as follows:

55 "ARTICLE 6A

56 40-2-140.

57 (a) The Department of Revenue shall be the state agency responsible for the administration
 58 of the federal Unified Carrier Registration Act of 2005, which includes participating in the
 59 development, implementation, and administration of the Unified Carrier Registration
 60 Agreement.

61 (b) Every foreign or domestic motor carrier, leasing company leasing to either a common
62 or contract carrier, broker, or freight forwarder that engages in interstate commerce in this
63 state shall register with the commissioner or a base state and pay all fees as required by the
64 federal Unified Carrier Registration Act of 2005.

65 (c)(1) Any motor carrier, leasing company leasing to either a common or contract carrier,
66 broker, or freight forwarder that engages in intrastate commerce and operates a motor
67 vehicle on or over any public highway of this state shall register with the commissioner
68 and pay a fee determined by the commissioner.

69 (2) No motor carrier shall be issued a registration unless there is filed with the
70 commissioner a certificate of insurance for such applicant or holder, on forms prescribed
71 by the commissioner, evidencing a policy of indemnity insurance by an insurance
72 company licensed to do business in this state. Such policy shall provide for the protection
73 of passengers in passenger vehicles and the protection of the public against the
74 negligence of such motor carrier, and its servants or agents, when it is determined to be
75 the proximate cause of any injury. The commissioner shall determine and fix the
76 amounts of such indemnity insurance and shall prescribe the provisions and limitations
77 thereof. The insurer shall file such certificate. Failure to file any form required by the
78 commissioner shall not diminish the rights of any person to pursue an action directly
79 against a motor carrier's insurer. The insurer may file its certificate of insurance
80 electronically with the commissioner.

81 (3) The commissioner shall have the power to permit self-insurance in lieu of a policy
82 of indemnity insurance whenever in his or her opinion the financial ability of the motor
83 carrier so warrants.

84 (4) Any person having a cause of action, whether arising in tort or contract, under this
85 Code section may join in the same cause of action the motor carrier and its insurance
86 carrier.

87 (d) Before any motor carrier engaged in exempt passenger intrastate commerce shall
88 operate any motor vehicle on or over any public highway of this state, the motor carrier
89 shall register with the commissioner and pay a fee determined by the commissioner.

90 (e) In addition to any requirements under the federal Unified Carrier Registration Act of
91 2005, motor carriers required to have operating authority shall fulfill all applicable
92 requirements for obtaining operating authority prior to any operation of a motor vehicle to
93 which such requirements apply.

94 (f) The commissioner shall collect the fees imposed by this Code section and may establish
95 rules and regulations and prescribe such forms as are necessary to administer this Code
96 section and the federal Unified Carrier Registration Act of 2005. Notwithstanding the
97 provisions of Code Sections 40-2-131 and 48-2-17, the commissioner shall retain and

98 utilize such fees for motor carrier safety programs and enforcement and administration of
 99 this article.

100 (g) The commissioner of public safety, and persons he or she designates pursuant to
 101 Chapter 2 of Title 35, shall have the authority to perform regulatory compliance inspections
 102 under the provisions of Article 5 of Chapter 2 of Title 35 for purposes of determining
 103 compliance with laws and regulations, the enforcement and administration of which is the
 104 responsibility of the Department of Public Safety.

105 (h) Every officer, agent, or employee of any corporation and every person who fails to
 106 comply with this article and any order, rule, or regulation of the Public Service
 107 Commission, Department of Public Safety, or Department of Revenue, or who procures,
 108 aids, or abets therein, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Misdemeanor violations of this
 109 article may be prosecuted, handled, and disposed of in the manner provided for in Chapter
 110 13 of this title."

111 **SECTION 3.**

112 Title 46 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to public utilities and public
 113 transportation, is amended by repealing Code Section 46-7-12.1, relating to motor carriers'
 114 requirements as to obtaining indemnity insurance or self-insurance before issuance of permit,
 115 in its entirety.

116 **SECTION 4.**

117 Said title is further amended by repealing and reserving Code Section 46-7-15, relating to
 118 registration and licensing of motor carriers and cities and counties barred from levying taxes
 119 on carriers.

120 **SECTION 5.**

121 Said title is further amended by repealing Code Section 46-7-15.1, relating to motor carrier
 122 of property permits, in its entirety.

123 **SECTION 6.**

124 Said title is further amended by repealing and reserving Code Section 46-7-16, relating to
 125 registration and insurance for motor carriers engaged solely in interstate commerce;
 126 emergency, temporary, or trip-lease vehicle registration permits; late registration and
 127 identification; reciprocal agreements; and certificate not required.

128 **SECTION 7.**

129 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 46-7-26, relating to the authority of
 130 the commissioner to promulgate rules and regulations for safety, as follows:
 131 "46-7-26.

132 (a) The commissioner of public safety shall have the authority to promulgate rules and
 133 regulations for the safe operation of motor vehicles and drivers and the safe transportation
 134 of hazardous materials. Any such rules and regulations promulgated or deemed necessary
 135 by the commissioner of public safety shall include the following:

136 (1) Every motor vehicle and all parts thereof shall be maintained in a safe condition at
 137 all times; and the lights, brakes, and equipment shall meet such safety requirements as the
 138 commissioner of public safety shall from time to time promulgate;

139 (2) Every driver employed to operate a motor vehicle for a motor carrier shall be at least
 140 18 years of age, of temperate habits and good moral character, possess a valid driver's
 141 license, not use or possess prohibited drugs or alcohol while on duty, and shall be fully
 142 competent to operate the motor vehicle under his or her charge;

143 (3) Accidents arising from or in connection with the operation of motor common or
 144 contract carriers shall be reported to the commissioner of transportation in such detail and
 145 in such manner as the commissioner of transportation may require; and

146 (4) The commissioner of public safety shall require every motor common, contract,
 147 exempt, and contract-carrier private carrier's vehicles to have attached to each unit or
 148 vehicle such distinctive markings ~~or tags~~ as shall be adopted by the commissioner of
 149 public safety. Such identification requirements shall comply with the applicable
 150 provisions of the federal Unified Carrier Registration Act of 2005.

151 (b) Regulations governing the safe operation of motor vehicles and drivers and the safe
 152 transportation of hazardous materials may be adopted by administrative order, including,
 153 but not limited to, referencing compatible federal regulations or standards without
 154 compliance with the procedural requirements of Chapter 13 of Title 50, provided that such
 155 compatible federal regulations or standards shall be maintained on file by the Department
 156 of Public Safety and made available for inspection and copying by the public, by means
 157 including, but not limited to, posting on the department's computer Internet site. The
 158 commissioner of public safety may comply with the filing requirements of Chapter 13 of
 159 Title 50 by filing with the office of the Secretary of State merely the name and designation
 160 of such rules, regulations, standards, and orders. The courts shall take judicial notice of
 161 rules, regulations, standards, or orders so adopted or published.

162 (c) The commissioner of public safety may, pursuant to rule or regulation, specify and
 163 impose civil monetary penalties for violations of laws, rules, and regulations relating to
 164 driver and motor carrier safety and transportation of hazardous materials. Except as may

165 be hereafter authorized by law, the maximum amount of any such monetary penalty shall
 166 not exceed the maximum penalty authorized by law or rule or regulation for the same
 167 violation immediately prior to July 1, 2005."

168 **SECTION 8.**

169 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 46-7-37, relating to private carriers
 170 excepted from application of article; safety rules authorized; and certificates or permits not
 171 required, as follows:

172 "46-7-37.

173 (a) Except as otherwise provided in ~~subsection (b)~~ of this Code section, this article shall
 174 not apply to private carriers engaged exclusively in the transportation of goods belonging
 175 to the individual, firm, partnership, corporation, or association owning, controlling,
 176 operating, or managing the motor vehicle in private transportation over any public highway
 177 in this state.

178 ~~(b) The commission shall have the authority to promulgate rules designed to promote~~
 179 ~~safety of private carriers. Every motor vehicle of a private carrier and all parts thereof shall~~
 180 ~~be maintained in a safe condition at all times; and the carrier's equipment shall meet such~~
 181 ~~safety requirements as the commission shall from time to time promulgate. Private carriers~~
 182 shall be subject to the requirements of Code Sections 46-7-26 and 46-7-27, as well as the
 183 jurisdiction of the commissioner of public safety, pursuant to Article 5 of Chapter 2 of Title
 184 35.

185 (c) Private carriers are not required to hold certificates or permits issued by the
 186 commission."

187 **SECTION 9.**

188 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 46-7-39, relating to the penalty for
 189 failure to comply with Chapter 7 of such title, as follows:

190 "46-7-39.

191 (a) Every officer, agent, or employee of any corporation and every person who violates or
 192 fails to comply with this chapter relating to the regulation of motor carriers; or any order,
 193 rule, or regulation of the Public Service Commission, Department of Public Safety, or
 194 Department of Revenue, or who procures, aids, or abets therein, shall be guilty of a
 195 misdemeanor.

196 (b) No person shall drive or operate, or cause the operation of, a motor vehicle in violation
 197 of an out-of-service order. As used in this subsection, the term 'out-of-service order' means
 198 a temporary prohibition against operating as a carrier or driving or moving a motor vehicle,
 199 freight container or any cargo thereon, or any package containing a hazardous material.

200 (c) Misdemeanor violations of this chapter may be prosecuted, handled, and disposed of
201 in the manner provided for by Chapter 13 of Title 40."

202 **SECTION 10.**

203 (a) Sections 3 through 5 of this Act shall become effective October 1, 2009, for the purpose
204 of adopting rules and regulations to implement the federal Unified Carrier Registration Act
205 of 2005.

206 (b) The remaining sections of this Act shall become effective upon its approval by the
207 Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

208 **SECTION 11.**

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