

House Bill 57 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Powell of the 29<sup>th</sup> and Rice of the 51<sup>st</sup>

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 or  
 47 ~~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 a motor carrier,  
62 broker, or freight forwarder that engages in interstate commerce in this state shall register  
63 with the commissioner or a base state and pay all fees as required by the federal Unified  
64 Carrier Registration Act of 2005.

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

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

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

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

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

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

95 (f) The commissioner shall collect the fees imposed by this Code section and may establish  
96 rules and regulations and prescribe such forms as are necessary to administer this Code  
97 section and the federal Unified Carrier Registration Act of 2005. Notwithstanding the

98 provisions of Code Sections 40-2-131 and 48-2-17, the commissioner shall retain and  
 99 utilize such fees for motor carrier safety programs and enforcement and administration of  
 100 this article.

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

106 (h) Every officer, agent, or employee of any corporation and every person who fails to  
 107 comply with this article and any order, rule, or regulation of the Public Service  
 108 Commission, Department of Public Safety, or Department of Revenue, or who procures,  
 109 aids, or abets therein, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Misdemeanor violations of this  
 110 article may be prosecuted, handled, and disposed of in the manner provided for in Chapter  
 111 13 of this title."

112 **SECTION 3.**

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

117 **SECTION 4.**

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

121 **SECTION 5.**

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

124 **SECTION 6.**

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

129 **SECTION 7.**

130 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 46-7-26, relating to the authority of  
 131 the commissioner to promulgate rules and regulations for safety, as follows:  
 132 "46-7-26.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

169 **SECTION 8.**

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

173 "46-7-37.

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

179 ~~(b) The commission shall have the authority to promulgate rules designed to promote~~  
 180 ~~safety of private carriers. Every motor vehicle of a private carrier and all parts thereof shall~~  
 181 ~~be maintained in a safe condition at all times; and the carrier's equipment shall meet such~~  
 182 ~~safety requirements as the commission shall from time to time promulgate. Private carriers~~  
 183 shall be subject to the requirements of Code Sections 46-7-26 and 46-7-27, as well as the  
 184 jurisdiction of the commissioner of public safety, pursuant to Article 5 of Chapter 2 of Title  
 185 35.

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

188 **SECTION 9.**

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

191 "46-7-39.

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

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

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

203 **SECTION 10.**

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

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

209 **SECTION 11.**

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