

1 SB154
2 209657-2
3 By Senator Price
4 RFD: Transportation and Energy
5 First Read: 01-FEB-22

1 SB154

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4 ENROLLED, An Act,

5 Relating to motor vehicles; to amend Section
6 32-9-20, Code of Alabama 1975, to provide for a uniform
7 maximum vehicle width restriction for vehicles operating on
8 state highways.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

10 Section 1. Section 32-9-20, Code of Alabama 1975, is
11 amended to read as follows:

12 "§32-9-20.

13 "(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to drive or
14 move on any highway in this state any vehicle or vehicles of a
15 size or weight except in accordance with the following:

16 "(1) WIDTH. Vehicles and combinations of vehicles,
17 operating on highways ~~with traffic lanes 12 feet or more in~~
18 ~~width,~~ shall not exceed a total outside width, including any
19 load thereon, of 102 inches, exclusive of mirrors or other
20 safety devices approved by the Department of Transportation.
21 ~~The Director of Transportation may, in his or her discretion,~~
22 ~~designate other public highways for use by vehicles and loads~~
23 ~~with total outside widths not exceeding 102 inches, otherwise,~~
24 ~~vehicles and combinations of vehicles, operating on highways~~
25 ~~with traffic lanes less than 12 feet in width, shall not~~

1 ~~exceed a total outside width, including any load thereon, of~~
2 ~~96 inches, exclusive of mirrors or other safety devices~~
3 ~~approved by the Department of Transportation.~~ No passenger
4 vehicle shall carry any load extending beyond the line of the
5 fenders. No vehicle hauling forest products or culvert pipe on
6 any highway in this state shall have a load exceeding 102
7 inches in width.

8 "(2) HEIGHT. No vehicle or semitrailer or trailer
9 shall exceed in height 13 1/2 feet, including load.

10 "(3) LENGTH. No vehicle shall exceed in length 40
11 feet; except, that the length of a truck-semitrailer
12 combination, semitrailers, including load, used in a truck
13 tractor-semitrailer combination, shall not exceed 57 feet;
14 semitrailers and trailers, including load, used in a truck
15 tractor-semitrailer-trailer combination, shall not exceed 28
16 1/2 feet each; and motor vehicles designed, used, or
17 maintained primarily as a mobile dwelling, office, or
18 commercial space, commonly called motor homes, shall not
19 exceed 45 feet. Semitrailers exceeding 53 1/2 feet shall only
20 be operated on highways designated pursuant to Section 32-9-1
21 and shall only be operated when the distance between the
22 kingpin of the semitrailer and the rearmost axle or a point
23 midway between the two rear axles, if the two rear axles are
24 tandem axles, does not exceed 41 feet and if the semitrailer
25 is equipped with a rear underride guard of a substantial

1 construction consisting of a continuous lateral beam extending
2 to within four inches of the lateral extremities of the
3 semitrailer and located not more than 22 inches from the
4 surface as measured with the semitrailers empty and on a level
5 surface. For purposes of enforcement of this subdivision,
6 lengths of semitrailers and trailers refer to the cargo
7 carrying portion of the unit. Truck tractor units used
8 exclusively in combinations transporting motor vehicles may
9 directly carry a portion of the cargo, provided that the
10 combinations are restricted to truck tractor-semitrailer
11 combinations only and provided further that the overall length
12 of these particular combinations shall not exceed 65 feet;
13 except that the overall length of stinger-steered type units
14 shall not exceed 80 feet. No truck tractor-semitrailer
15 combination used exclusively for transporting motor vehicles
16 shall carry any load extending more than four feet beyond the
17 front or six feet beyond the rear of the combination. No other
18 vehicle operated on a highway shall carry any load extending
19 more than a total of five feet beyond both the front and rear,
20 inclusive, of the vehicle.

21 "(4) WEIGHT.

22 "a. The gross weight imposed on the highway by the
23 wheels of any one axle of a vehicle shall not exceed 20,000
24 pounds, or ~~such~~ other weight, if any, as may be permitted by
25 federal law to keep the state from losing federal funds;

1 provided, that inadequate bridges shall be posted to define
2 load limits.

3 "b. For the purpose of this section, an axle load
4 shall be defined as the total load transmitted to the road by
5 all wheels whose centers are included between two parallel
6 transverse vertical planes 40 inches apart, extending across
7 the full width of the vehicle.

8 "c. Subject to the limit upon the weight imposed
9 upon the highway through any one axle as set forth herein, the
10 total weight with load imposed upon the highway by all the
11 axles of a vehicle or combination of vehicles shall not exceed
12 the gross weight given for the respective distances between
13 the first and last axle of the vehicle or combination of vehi-
14 cles, measured longitudinally to the nearest foot as set forth
15 in the following table:

16 COMPUTED GROSS WEIGHT TABLE

17 For various spacings of axle groupings

18	Distance in feet between first	Maximum load in
19	and last axles of vehicle or	pounds on all the
20	combination of vehicles	axles

21	2 axles	3 axles	4 axles	5 axles	6 axles
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1	8 or	36,000	42,000	42,000		
2	less					
3	9	38,000	42,500	42,500		
4	10	40,000	43,500	43,500		
5	11		44,000	44,000		
6	12		45,000	50,000	50,000	
7	13		45,500	50,500	50,500	
8	14		46,500	51,500	51,500	
9	15		47,000	52,000	52,000	
10	16		48,000	52,500	58,000	58,000
11	17		48,500	53,500	58,500	58,500
12	18		49,500	54,000	59,000	59,000
13	19		50,000	54,500	60,000	60,000
14	20		51,000	55,500	60,500	66,000
15	21		51,500	56,000	61,000	66,500
16	22		52,500	56,500	61,500	67,000
17	23		53,000	57,500	62,500	68,000
18	24		54,000	58,000	63,000	68,500
19	25		54,500	58,500	63,500	69,000
20	26		56,000	59,500	64,000	69,500
21	27		57,000	60,000	65,000	70,000

1	28	59,000	60,500	65,500	71,000
2	29	60,000	61,500	66,000	71,500
3	30		62,000	66,500	72,000
4	31		63,500	67,000	72,500
5	32		64,500	68,000	73,500
6	33		65,000	69,000	74,000
7	34		65,500	70,000	74,500
8	35		66,500	71,000	75,000
9	36		67,000	72,000	76,000
10	37		68,000	73,000	77,000
11	38		69,000	74,000	78,000
12	39		70,000	75,000	79,000
13	40		71,000	76,000	80,000
14	41		72,000	77,000	81,000
15	42		73,000	78,000	82,000
16	43		74,000	79,000	83,000
17	44 and		75,000	80,000	84,000
18	over				

19 "Except as provided by special permits, no vehicle
 20 or combination of vehicles exceeding the gross weights

1 specified above shall be permitted to travel on the public
2 highways within the State of Alabama.

3 "No vehicle or combination of vehicles shall be
4 permitted to operate on any portion of the Interstate Highway
5 System of Alabama that shall have a greater weight than 20,000
6 pounds carried on any one axle, including all enforcement
7 tolerances, or with a tandem axle weight in excess of 34,000
8 pounds, including all enforcement tolerances, or with an
9 overall gross weight on a group of two or more consecutive
10 axles produced by application of the following formula:

$$11 \quad W=500 \quad (LN \quad + \quad 12N \quad + \quad 36)$$

$$12 \quad (N-1)$$

13 where W = overall gross weight on any group of two
14 or more consecutive axles to the nearest 500 pounds, L =
15 distance in feet between the extreme of any group of two or
16 more consecutive axles, and N = number of axles in group under
17 consideration; except, that two consecutive sets of tandem
18 axles may carry a gross load of 34,000 pounds each, provided
19 the overall distance between the first and last axles of the
20 consecutive sets of tandem axles is 36 feet or more; provided,
21 that the overall gross weight may not exceed 80,000 pounds,
22 including all enforcement tolerances. Nothing in this section
23 shall be construed as permitting size or weight limits on the

1 National System of Interstate and Defense Highways in this
2 state in excess of those permitted under 23 U.S.C. ~~Section~~ §
3 127. If the federal government prescribes or adopts vehicle
4 size or weight limits greater than or less than those now
5 prescribed by 23 U.S.C. ~~Section~~ § 127 for the National System
6 of Interstate and Defense Highways, the increased or decreased
7 limits shall become effective on the National System of
8 Interstate and Defense Highways in this state. Nothing in this
9 section shall be construed to deny the operation of any
10 vehicle or combination of vehicles that could be lawfully
11 operated upon the highways and roads of this state on January
12 4, 1975.

13 "d. For purposes of enforcement of this subdivision,
14 all weights less than or equal to the sum of the weight
15 otherwise prescribed by this subdivision, plus an additional
16 weight to be calculated by multiplying the weight prescribed
17 by this subdivision by one-tenth (.10) that shall represent a
18 scale or enforcement tolerance, shall be deemed to be in
19 compliance with the requirements of this section, and shall
20 not constitute violations thereof. No evidence shall be
21 admitted into evidence or considered by the trier of fact in
22 any civil action unless the evidence proffered would tend to
23 prove that the weight of the vehicle exceeded the amount
24 provided in this subsection. Nothing in this paragraph ~~d.~~
25 shall restrict or affect the right of any defendant to place

1 in evidence such evidence tending to prove the defendant was
2 in compliance with this section.

3 "e. Dump trucks, dump trailers, concrete mixing
4 trucks, fuel oil, gasoline trucks, and trucks designated and
5 constructed for special type work or use shall not be made to
6 conform to the axle spacing requirements of paragraph ~~(4)c.~~ of
7 ~~this section~~; provided, that the vehicle shall be limited to a
8 weight of 20,000 pounds per axle plus scale tolerances; and,
9 provided further, that the maximum gross weight of the
10 vehicles shall not exceed the maximum weight allowed by this
11 section for the appropriate number of axles, irrespective of
12 the distance between axles, plus allowable scale tolerances.
13 All axles shall be brake equipped. Trucks delivering asphalt
14 plant mix which do not exceed the maximum allowable gross
15 weight and operate within 50 miles of their home base shall
16 not be required to conform to the requirements of paragraph
17 ~~(4)a.~~ of ~~this section~~. Concrete mixing trucks which operate
18 within 50 miles of their home base and do not exceed the
19 maximum allowable gross weight shall not be required to
20 conform to the requirements of paragraph ~~(4)a.~~ of ~~this~~
21 ~~section~~. It shall be a violation if the vehicles named under
22 this subdivision travel upon bridges designated and posted by
23 the Transportation Director as incapable of carrying the load.

24 "f. If the driver of any vehicle can comply with the
25 weight requirements of this section by shifting or equalizing

1 the load on all wheels or axles and does so when requested by
2 the proper authority, the driver shall not be held to be
3 operating in violation of this section.

4 "g. When portable scales are used in the enforcement
5 of this section, the axles of any vehicle described or
6 commonly referred to as tandem or triaxle rigs or units (that
7 is, vehicles having two or more axles in addition to a
8 steering axle), the group of tandem or triaxles shall be
9 weighed simultaneously, and the total weight so derived shall
10 be divided by the number of axles weighed in the group to
11 arrive at the per axle weight, except that if any one axle in
12 the group exceeds 20,000 pounds in weight, it shall not exceed
13 the weight of any other axle in the group by more than 50
14 percent. When portable scales are used to determine the weight
15 of a vehicle pursuant to this section, the operator of the
16 vehicle will be permitted to move the vehicle to the nearest
17 platform scales certified by the Department of Agriculture and
18 Industries and operated by a bonded operator within a distance
19 of 10 highway miles, accompanied by an enforcement officer to
20 verify the accuracy of the portable scales used in determining
21 the vehicle weight. If the weight of the vehicle is shown by
22 the platform scales to be within the legal limits of this
23 section, the operator of the vehicle shall not be held to be
24 in violation of this section.

1 "h. The governing body of a county, by appropriate
2 resolution, may authorize limitations less than those
3 prescribed herein for vehicles operated upon the county
4 highways of the county.

5 "i. The Department of Transportation may post or
6 limit any road or bridge to weights less than those prescribed
7 by this section. It is the legislative intent and purpose that
8 this section be rigidly enforced by the Department of
9 Transportation, the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency, and
10 any other authorized law enforcement officers of the state,
11 any county, or city and incorporated towns.

12 "j. Two and three axle vehicles being used
13 exclusively for the purpose of transporting agricultural
14 commodities or products to and from a farm and for
15 agricultural purposes relating to the operation and
16 maintenance of a farm by any farmer, custom harvester, or
17 husbandman may not be made to conform to the axle requirements
18 of paragraph ~~(4)a.~~ of this section or the gross weight
19 requirements of paragraph ~~(4)c.~~ of this section.

20 "(b) (1) Any vehicle utilizing an auxiliary power or
21 idle reduction technology unit in order to promote reduction
22 of fuel use and emissions because of engine idling shall be
23 allowed an additional 400 pounds total to the gross, axle,
24 tandem, or bridge formula weight limits defined in this
25 section.

1 "(2) To be eligible for the exception provided in
2 this subsection, the operator of the vehicle must provide
3 written proof or certification of the weight of the auxiliary
4 power unit (APU) and demonstrate or certify the idle reduction
5 technology is fully functional at all times.

6 "(3) Written proof or certification of the weight of
7 the APU must be available to law enforcement officers if the
8 vehicle is found in violation of applicable weight laws. The
9 weight allowed cannot exceed 400 pounds or the actual weight
10 proven or certified, whichever is less.

11 "(4) It is the intent of this subsection to apply at
12 the state highway level the weight limit increase for vehicles
13 using a functioning auxiliary power or idle reduction
14 technology as provided in the Federal Energy Policy Act of
15 2005.

16 "(c) (1) Any motor vehicle, if operated by an engine
17 fueled primarily by natural gas, may exceed any vehicle weight
18 limit, up to a maximum gross vehicle weight of 82,000 pounds,
19 under this section by an amount that is equal to the
20 difference between:

21 "a. The weight of the vehicle attributable to the
22 natural gas tank and fueling system carried by that vehicle;
23 and

24 "b. The weight of a comparable diesel tank and
25 fueling system.

1 "(2) This subsection applies on federal interstate
2 highways to the weight limit increases for vehicles using an
3 EPA certified natural gas engine or an EPA approved conversion
4 unit installed on the vehicle which allows the vehicle to
5 operate primarily on compressed natural gas or liquefied
6 natural gas."

7 Section 2. This act shall become effective
8 immediately following its passage and approval by the
9 Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.

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President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Representatives

SB154

Senate 16-FEB-22

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in and passed the Senate.

Patrick Harris,
Secretary.

House of Representatives
Passed: 15-MAR-22

By: Senator Price