

HOUSE BILL 551

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By: **Delegates Shank, V. Clagett, Cane, Cluster, Elmore, Frush, Glassman,
Hogan, Jennings, McConkey, Owings, Parker, Sophocleus, Sossi, Stull,
Weir, and Weldon**

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Assigned to: Environmental Matters

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House action: Adopted
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CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws - Trailers and Semitrailers - Surge Brakes**

3 FOR the purpose of exempting certain vehicles from certain brake requirements;
4 authorizing a certain trailer or semitrailer to be equipped with surge brakes if
5 the trailer or semitrailer meets certain requirements relating to weight, design,
6 and use; requiring the Secretary of Transportation to adopt certain regulations
7 to be effective by a certain date; defining a certain term; providing for the
8 effective dates of this Act; and generally relating to the use of surge brakes on
9 certain trailers and semitrailers under certain circumstances.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
11 Article - Transportation
12 Section 11-158 and 11-169
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2003 Supplement)

15 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
16 Article - Transportation
17 Section 22-301
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2003 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
21 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

1

Article - Transportation

2 11-158.

3 (a) "Semitrailer" means, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, a
4 vehicle that:

5 (1) Has no motive power;

6 (2) Is designed to carry people or property and to be towed by a motor
7 vehicle; and

8 (3) Is constructed so that some of its weight and load rests on or is
9 carried by another vehicle.

10 (b) "Semitrailer" does not include a pole trailer.

11 11-169.

12 (a) "Trailer" means, except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, a
13 vehicle that:

14 (1) Has no motive power;

15 (2) Is designed to carry people or property and to be towed by a motor
16 vehicle; and

17 (3) Is constructed so that no part of its weight rests on the towing
18 vehicle.

19 (b) "Trailer" does not include a pole trailer.

20 22-301.

21 (a) "Driveaway or towaway operation" means any operation in which any
22 motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer, singly or in combination, new or used, is the
23 commodity being transported, when one set or more of wheels of the vehicle are on the
24 roadway during the transportation, whether or not the vehicle furnishes the motive
25 power.

26 (b) Every motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer, and any
27 combination of these vehicles, while operating on a highway in this State, shall be
28 equipped with brakes in compliance with the requirements of this title. All the
29 vehicles and combinations of vehicles shall be equipped with service brakes complying
30 with the performance requirements of § 22-302 of this subtitle and, EXCEPT AS
31 PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (L) OF THIS SECTION, adequate to control the movement of
32 and to stop and hold the vehicle under all conditions of loading, and on any grade
33 incident to its operation.

34 (c) (1) All the vehicles and combinations of vehicles, except motorcycles,
35 shall be equipped with parking brakes adequate to hold the vehicle on any grade on

1 which it is operated, under all conditions of loading, on a surface free from snow, ice,
2 or loose material.

3 (2) The parking brakes shall be capable of being applied in conformance
4 with the foregoing requirements by the driver's muscular effort or by spring action or
5 by equivalent means. Their operation may be assisted by the service brakes or other
6 source of power, provided that failure of the service brake actuation system or other
7 power assisting mechanism will not prevent the parking brakes from being applied in
8 conformance with the foregoing requirements.

9 (3) The parking brakes shall be so designed that when once applied they
10 shall remain applied with the required effectiveness despite exhaustion of any source
11 of energy or leakage of any kind.

12 (4) The same brake drums, brake shoes and lining assemblies, brake
13 shoe anchors and mechanical brake shoe actuation mechanism normally associated
14 with the wheel brake assemblies may be used for both the service brakes and the
15 parking brakes. If the means of applying the parking brakes and the service brakes
16 are connected in any way, they shall be so constructed that failure of any one part
17 does not leave the vehicle without operative brakes.

18 (d) Every vehicle shall be equipped with brakes acting on all wheels, except:

19 (1) Trailers, semitrailers, or pole trailers of a registered gross weight not
20 exceeding 3,000 pounds, provided that:

21 (i) The total weight on and including the wheels of the trailer or
22 trailers does not exceed 40 percent of the gross weight of the towing vehicle when
23 connected to the trailer or trailers; and

24 (ii) The combination of vehicles, consisting of the towing vehicle
25 and its total towed load, is capable of complying with the performance requirements
26 of § 22-302 of this subtitle;

27 (2) Trailers, semitrailers, or pole trailers of a registered gross weight
28 exceeding 3,000 pounds and not exceeding 10,000 pounds that:

29 (i) Have 2 or more axles;

30 (ii) Are equipped with brakes acting on all wheels of at least 1 axle;
31 and

32 (iii) As part of a combination of vehicles, consisting of the towing
33 vehicle and the total load, is capable of complying with the performance requirements
34 of § 22-302 of this subtitle;

35 (3) Any vehicle being towed in driveaway or towaway operations,
36 provided that the combination of vehicles is capable of complying with the
37 performance requirements of § 22-302 of this subtitle;

1 (4) Trucks, truck tractors, and special mobile equipment manufactured
2 before July 24, 1980 with three or more axles need not have brakes on the front
3 wheels. However, the trucks and truck tractors must be capable of complying with the
4 performance requirements of § 22-302 of this subtitle;

5 (5) The wheel of a sidecar attached to a motorcycle or to a motor-driven
6 cycle, or the front wheel of a motor-driven cycle need not be equipped with brakes,
7 provided that the motorcycle or motor-driven cycle is capable of complying with the
8 performance requirements of § 22-302 of this subtitle; and

9 (6) Any vehicle equipped with at least 2 steerable axles need not have
10 brakes on the wheels of 1 of the axles. However, the vehicle must be capable of
11 complying with the performance requirements of § 22-302 of this subtitle.

12 (e) (1) Every trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer equipped with air or
13 vacuum actuated brakes, and every trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer with a
14 registered gross weight in excess of 10,000 pounds, manufactured or assembled after
15 June 1, 1970, shall be equipped with brakes acting on all wheels and of a character to
16 be applied automatically and promptly, and remain applied for at least 15 minutes on
17 breakaway from the towing vehicle.

18 (2) Every trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer with a registered gross
19 weight of more than 3,000 pounds and not more than 10,000 pounds, manufactured or
20 assembled after June 1, 1970, shall be equipped with brakes acting on all wheels of at
21 least 1 axle and of a character to be applied automatically and promptly, and remain
22 applied for at least 15 minutes on breakaway from the towing vehicle.

23 (f) Every motor vehicle manufactured or assembled after June 1, 1970, and
24 used to tow a trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer equipped with brakes, shall be
25 equipped with means for providing that, in case of breakaway of the towed vehicle,
26 the towing vehicle will be capable of being stopped by the use of its service brakes.

27 (g) Air brake systems installed on trailers manufactured or assembled after
28 June 1, 1970, shall be so designed that the supply reservoir used to provide air for the
29 brakes is safeguarded against backflow of air from the reservoir through the supply
30 line.

31 (h) (1) Air Brakes. After June 1, 1971, every towing vehicle, when used to
32 tow another vehicle equipped with air controlled brakes, in other than driveaway or
33 towaway operations, shall be equipped with two means for emergency application of
34 the trailer brakes. One of these means shall apply the brakes automatically in the
35 event of a reduction of the towing vehicle air supply to a fixed pressure, which shall be
36 not lower than 20 pounds per square inch nor higher than 45 pounds per square inch.
37 The other means shall be a manually controlled device for applying and releasing the
38 brakes, readily operable by a person seated in the driving seat, and its emergency
39 position or method of operation shall be clearly indicated. In no instance may the
40 manual arrangement be arranged to permit its use to prevent operation of the
41 automatic means. The automatic and the manual means required by this section may
42 be, but are not required to be, separate.

1 (2) Vacuum Brakes. After June 1, 1970, every towing vehicle used to tow
2 other vehicles equipped with vacuum brakes, in operations other than driveaway or
3 towaway operations, shall have, in addition to the single control device required by
4 subsection (i) of this section, a second control device that can be used to operate the
5 brakes on towed vehicles in emergencies. The second control shall be independent of
6 brake air, hydraulic, and other pressure, and independent of other controls, unless the
7 braking system is so arranged that failure of the pressure on which the second control
8 depends will cause the towed vehicle brakes to be applied automatically. The second
9 control is not required to provide modulated braking.

10 (i) [After] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (L) OF THIS SECTION,
11 AFTER June 1, 1971, every motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer, and
12 every combination of these vehicles, except motorcycles, equipped with brakes shall
13 have the braking system so arranged that one control device can be used to operate all
14 service brakes. This requirement does not prohibit vehicles from being equipped with
15 an additional control device to be used to operate brakes on the towed vehicles. This
16 regulation does not apply to driveaway or towaway operations unless the brakes on
17 the individual vehicles are designed to be operated by a single control on the towing
18 vehicle, nor does it apply to the operation of electric trailer brakes.

19 (j) (1) Air Brakes. Every bus, truck, or truck tractor with air operated
20 brakes shall be equipped with at least one reservoir sufficient to insure that, when
21 fully charged to the maximum pressure as regulated by the air compressor governor
22 cut-out setting, a full service brake application may be made without lowering the
23 reservoir pressure by more than 20 percent. Each reservoir shall be provided with
24 means for readily draining accumulated oil or water.

25 (2) Vacuum Brakes. After June 1, 1971, every truck with three or more
26 axles equipped with vacuum assist type brakes and every truck tractor and truck
27 used for towing a vehicle equipped with vacuum brakes shall be equipped with a
28 reserve capacity or a vacuum reservoir sufficient to insure that, with the reserve
29 capacity or reservoir fully charged and with the engine stopped, a full service brake
30 application may be made without depleting the vacuum supply by more than 40
31 percent.

32 (3) Reservoir Safeguarded. All motor vehicles, trailers, semitrailers, and
33 pole trailers, when equipped with air or vacuum reservoirs or reserve capacity as
34 required by this section, shall have reservoirs or reserve capacity so safeguarded by a
35 check valve or equivalent device that, in the event of failure or leakage in its
36 connection to the source of compressed air or vacuum, the stored air or vacuum is not
37 depleted by the leak or failure.

38 (k) (1) Air Brakes. Every bus, truck, or truck tractor using compressed air
39 for the operation of its own brakes or the brakes on any towed vehicle, shall be
40 provided with a warning signal, other than a pressure gauge, readily audible or
41 visible to the driver, which will operate at any time that the air reservoir pressure of
42 the vehicle is below 50 percent of the air compressor governor cut-out pressure. In
43 addition, the vehicle shall be equipped with a pressure gauge visible to the driver,
44 which indicates in pounds per square inch the pressure available for braking.

1 (2) Vacuum Brakes. After June 1, 1971, every truck tractor and truck
2 used for towing a vehicle equipped with vacuum operated brakes and every truck with
3 three or more axles using vacuum in the operation of its brakes, except those in
4 driveaway or towaway operations, shall be equipped with a warning signal, other
5 than a gauge indicating vacuum, readily audible or visible to the driver, which will
6 operate at any time the vacuum in the vehicle's supply reservoir or reserve capacity is
7 less than 8 inches of mercury.

8 (3) Combination of Warning Devices. When a vehicle required to be
9 equipped with a warning device is equipped with both air and vacuum power for the
10 operation of its own brakes or the brakes on a towed vehicle, the warning devices may
11 be, but are not required to be, combined into a single device that serves both purposes.
12 A gauge or gauges indicating pressure or vacuum is not an adequate means of
13 satisfying this requirement.

14 (L) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, "SURGE BRAKES" MEANS A BRAKING SYSTEM
15 DESIGNED TO ACTIVATE THE BRAKES OF A VEHICLE BEING TOWED AS A RESULT OF
16 THE FORWARD PRESSURE OF THE VEHICLE AGAINST THE TOWING VEHICLE DURING
17 DECELERATION.

18 (2) A TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER MAY BE EQUIPPED WITH SURGE
19 BRAKES IF:

20 (I) THE TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER HAS A MANUFACTURER'S
21 GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING, OR REGISTERED WEIGHT, WHICHEVER IS LESS, OF
22 10,000 POUNDS OR LESS;

23 (II) THE COMBINED GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING, COMBINED
24 REGISTERED WEIGHT, AND THE GROSS COMBINATION WEIGHT OF THE TRAILER OR
25 SEMITRAILER AND THE TOWING VEHICLE IS 26,000 POUNDS OR LESS;

26 (III) THE VEHICLE OR COMBINATION OF VEHICLES IS NOT
27 DESIGNED OR USED TO TRANSPORT 16 OR MORE PASSENGERS INCLUDING THE
28 DRIVER OF THE TOWING VEHICLE;

29 (IV) THE ACTUAL GROSS WEIGHT OF THE TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER
30 AND LOAD DOES NOT EXCEED THE MANUFACTURER'S GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT
31 RATING OR REGISTERED WEIGHT, WHICHEVER IS LESS;

32 (V) THE ACTUAL GROSS WEIGHT OF THE TOWING VEHICLE AND
33 LOAD DOES NOT EXCEED THE MANUFACTURER'S GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING
34 OR REGISTERED WEIGHT, WHICHEVER IS LESS;

35 (VI) THE TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER BRAKES ARE DESIGNED AND
36 CONNECTED IN SUCH A MANNER THAT IN CASE OF ACCIDENTAL BREAKAWAY OF
37 THE TOWED VEHICLE, THE BRAKES WILL APPLY AUTOMATICALLY;

38 (VII) THE VEHICLE OR COMBINATION OF VEHICLES IS NOT USED TO
39 TRANSPORT HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OF A TYPE AND QUANTITY THAT REQUIRES
40 PLACARDING;

1 (VIII) THE VEHICLE OR COMBINATION OF VEHICLES IS NOT USED TO
2 TRANSPORT LIQUIDS OR GASES CONTAINED IN PACKAGING THAT EXCEEDS A
3 CAPACITY OF 119 GALLONS;

4 (IX) THE TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER HAS A GROSS WEIGHT RATING,
5 REGISTERED WEIGHT, OR GROSS WEIGHT, WHICHEVER IS GREATER, THAT IS NOT
6 MORE THAN ONE AND ONE-HALF TIMES THE GROSS WEIGHT RATING OR
7 REGISTERED WEIGHT, WHICHEVER IS LESS, OF THE TOWING VEHICLE; AND

8 (X) FOR VEHICLES USED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES, THE
9 TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER IS USED ONLY IN INTRASTATE COMMERCE.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Secretary of
11 Transportation shall adopt regulations, to be effective beginning October 1, 2004,
12 authorizing the use of surge brakes on trailers and semitrailers as authorized in this
13 Act.

14 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 1 of this Act shall
15 take effect October 1, 2004.

16 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, except as provided in
17 Section 3 of this Act, this Act shall take effect June 1, 2004.