

SENATE BILL 220

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R6

2004 Regular Session
4r1745
CF HB 171

By: **Senator Haines**

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2004

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws - Widths and Lengths of Vehicles and Loads**

3 FOR the purpose of increasing the distance beyond the statutory width limitation for
4 a Class M motor home or travel trailer that safety devices and retracted
5 awnings may extend when operated on interstate, State primary, or certain
6 other highways; increasing the length limitation of a Class M motor home
7 operated on interstate, State primary, or certain other highways; increasing the
8 statutory length limitation of a combination of noncommercial vehicles
9 consisting of a power unit and a travel trailer; clarifying language; and generally
10 relating to the widths and lengths of vehicles and loads.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article - Transportation
13 Section 24-102 and 24-104.1
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2003 Supplement)

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

18 **Article - Transportation**

19 24-102.

20 (a) For purposes of this section AND SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (C)(5) OF THIS
21 SECTION, the width of a vehicle includes any load that it carries and shall be
22 exclusive of safety and energy conservation devices, such as side mirrors, turn signal
23 lamps, marker lamps, steps and handholds for entry and egress, flexible fender
24 extensions, mudflaps and spray suppressant devices, and load-induced tire bulges;
25 providing the equipment or device, other than mirrors, does not extend more than 3
26 inches on each side of the vehicle beyond the statutory width limitation.

27 (b) This section does not apply to any:

28 (1) Farm equipment;

1 (2) Vehicle transporting farm equipment; or

2 (3) Vehicle carrying a load of forage crops in connection with harvesting
3 operations, if the distance traveled with the load on the highways in this State is less
4 than 5 miles.

5 (c) (1) A vehicle may not be driven on any highway if the width of the
6 vehicle exceeds the limits specified in this subsection, unless:

7 (i) It has a permit issued by the State Highway Administration
8 under § 24-112 of this subtitle; or

9 (ii) As to a highway under the jurisdiction of a local authority, it has
10 special permission from the local authority.

11 (2) For a motor vehicle loaded with tobacco hogsheads or sod, the width
12 limit is 102 inches.

13 (3) For a bus[, motor home, or travel trailer] on any highway that is
14 part of the interstate system or State primary system or for a publicly owned transit
15 bus, the width limit is 102 inches.

16 (4) For a truck or combination of vehicles, the width limit is 102 inches,
17 provided that:

18 (i) It is being operated on any part of the interstate system or other
19 State system highways that are designated by the Secretary in conjunction with the
20 U.S. Department of Transportation; or

21 (ii) It is being operated on a highway that:

22 1. Is the shortest practical route between a designated
23 highway and a truck terminal, a point of origin/destination for cargo, or for a distance
24 not to exceed 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel, repairs, or rest; or

25 2. Is the safest practical route and is a State highway with 4
26 or more lanes.

27 (5) FOR A CLASS M MOTOR HOME OR TRAVEL TRAILER, THE WIDTH
28 LIMIT IS 102 INCHES EXCLUDING SAFETY DEVICES AND RETRACTED AWNINGS THAT
29 EXTEND NO FURTHER THAN 6 INCHES ON EACH SIDE OF THE VEHICLE, PROVIDED
30 THAT:

31 (I) IT IS BEING OPERATED ON ANY PART OF THE INTERSTATE
32 HIGHWAY SYSTEM OR STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAY SYSTEM; OR

33 (II) IT IS BEING OPERATED ON THE SHORTEST PRACTICAL ROUTE
34 BETWEEN AN INTERSTATE HIGHWAY OR STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAY AND:

35 1. A POINT OF ORIGIN OR DESTINATION ON A PARTICULAR
36 DAY; OR

1 (i) Piling, poles, or mill logs; or

2 (ii) Crew or racing shells.

3 (2) This section does not prohibit the use of a combination of vehicles to
4 carry an indivisible load if the load is not over 70 feet long.

5 (d) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a bus, a single unit truck, or
6 a Class M motor home may not be over 40 feet long.

7 (e) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a publicly owned rigid
8 bus may not be over 41 feet long.

9 (2) The length of a bus OR A CLASS M MOTOR HOME [on any highway
10 that is part of the interstate system or State primary system may not exceed 45 feet.]
11 MAY NOT EXCEED 45 FEET, PROVIDED THAT:

12 (I) IT IS BEING OPERATED ON ANY PART OF THE INTERSTATE
13 HIGHWAY SYSTEM OR STATE PRIMARY SYSTEM; OR

14 (II) IT IS BEING OPERATED ON THE SHORTEST PRACTICAL ROUTE
15 BETWEEN AN INTERSTATE HIGHWAY OR STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAY AND:

16 1. A POINT OF ORIGIN OR DESTINATION ON A PARTICULAR
17 DAY; OR

18 2. FOR A DISTANCE NOT TO EXCEED 1 MILE, FACILITIES FOR
19 FOOD, FUEL, REPAIRS, OR REST.

20 (f) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a publicly owned articulated
21 three-axle bus may not be over 60 feet long.

22 (g) Any other vehicle may not exceed a length of 35 feet.

23 (h) When a semitrailer and a trailer (double) are being operated in
24 combination with a truck tractor, the combination of vehicles shall not be subject to
25 an overall length limitation. This combination may only be operated on any part of
26 the interstate system or other State system highways that are designated by the
27 Secretary in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Transportation, or on a
28 highway that is the shortest practical route between a designated highway and a
29 truck terminal, or point of origin/destination for cargo, or for a distance not to exceed
30 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel, repairs, or rest. A semitrailer or trailer being operated
31 in this combination may not exceed 28 feet in length for each unit.

32 (i) When a semitrailer (single) is being operated in combination with a truck
33 tractor, the combination of vehicles shall not be subject to an overall length limit,
34 however, the semitrailer may not exceed 48 feet in length.

35 (j) Except as otherwise provided in this section:

1 (1) In a combination of vehicles with a power unit that is a
2 cargo-carrying vehicle, the overall length of the combination may not exceed 62 feet;

3 (2) Any other combination of vehicles may not exceed 55 feet; and

4 (3) (i) 1. A truck or truck tractor and semitrailer combination
5 designed for and engaged exclusively in the transportation of automobiles or boats
6 may not exceed 65 feet in length;

7 2. A stinger-steered automobile transporter or a
8 saddle-mount or a full-mount combination may not exceed 75 feet in length; and

9 3. A. A maxi-cube vehicle described in subsection (a)(4)(i)
10 of this section may not exceed 65 feet in length; and

11 B. A maxi-cube vehicle described in subsection (a)(4)(ii) of
12 this section may not exceed 60 feet in length;

13 (ii) No other length requirements may be applied to the
14 combinations of vehicles described in item (i) of this paragraph; and

15 (iii) The combinations of vehicles described in item (i) of this
16 paragraph may only be operated on any part of the interstate system or other State
17 system highways that are designated by the Secretary in conjunction with the U.S.
18 Department of Transportation, or on a highway that is the shortest practical route
19 between a designated highway and:

20 1. A truck terminal;

21 2. A point of origin/destination for cargo; or

22 3. For a distance not to exceed 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel,
23 repairs, or rest.

24 (j-1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (j) of this section, when a
25 semitrailer is being operated in combination with a power unit that is equipped with
26 a dromedary box being used to transport explosives and munitions classified under 49
27 C.F.R. Part 173.50 that are intended for use by the United States Department of
28 Defense, the combination of vehicles is not subject to an overall length limit, but the
29 semitrailer may not exceed 48 feet in length.

30 (k) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (h) of this section,
31 nothing shall prevent the operation of a combination of vehicles in which the
32 semitrailer (single) does not exceed 48½ feet in length or a combination of vehicles in
33 which the semitrailer or trailer (double) does not exceed 28½ feet in length for each
34 unit; provided, the combination has been lawfully operated on the highways of this
35 State prior to December 1, 1982.

36 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (j)(1) of this section,
37 nothing shall prevent a power unit, which was equipped with a dromedary box, deck,

1 or plate and was legally operated in Maryland prior to December 1, 1982, in
2 combination with a semitrailer or trailer from exceeding the overall length limit of 55
3 feet.

4 (l) (1) In this subsection, "vehicle" means:

5 (i) A semitrailer as defined in § 11-158 of this article; or

6 (ii) A trailer as defined in § 11-169 of this article.

7 (2) Notwithstanding the overall length of the combination, a truck
8 tractor may not be operated on a highway in the State in combination with more than
9 2 vehicles.

10 (m) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, a combination of
11 noncommercial vehicles consisting of a power unit and a travel trailer may not exceed
12 [60] 65 feet in length.

13 (2) The combination of vehicles exceeding 55 feet but authorized under
14 this subsection may only be operated on:

15 (i) Any part of the interstate system or other State system
16 highways that are designated by the Secretary in conjunction with the U.S.
17 Department of Transportation; or

18 (ii) A highway that is the shortest practical route between a
19 designated highway and:

20 1. A point of origin or destination on a particular day; or

21 2. For a distance not to exceed 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel,
22 repairs, or rest.

23 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
24 October 1, 2004.