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By: **Senators Haines, Garagiola, Giannetti, and Jimeno**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2005

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Transportation - Vehicle Laws - Maximum Vehicle Width and Length**

3 FOR the purpose of providing for the calculation of the width of a motor home or  
4 travel trailer; authorizing the State Highway Administration and local  
5 authorities to restrict the width of vehicles traveling on certain highways in  
6 their jurisdiction under certain circumstances; requiring the State Highway  
7 Administration and local authorities to post certain signs if the width of vehicles  
8 is limited; increasing the maximum length of a publicly owned rigid bus or Class  
9 M motor home when operated on certain highways or routes; increasing the  
10 maximum length of a certain maxi-cube vehicle; and generally relating to  
11 vehicle laws and maximum vehicle widths and lengths.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
13 Article - Transportation  
14 Section 24-102 and 24-104.1  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2004 Supplement)

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

19 **Article - Transportation**

20 24-102.

21 (a) (1) [For] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS  
22 SUBSECTION, FOR purposes of this section, the width of a vehicle includes any load  
23 that it carries and shall be exclusive of safety and energy conservation devices, such  
24 as side mirrors, turn signal lamps, marker lamps, steps and handholds for entry and  
25 egress, flexible fender extensions, mudflaps and spray suppressant devices, and  
26 load-induced tire bulges; providing the equipment or device, other than mirrors, does  
27 not extend more than 3 inches on each side of the vehicle beyond the statutory width  
28 limitation.

1 (2) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, THE WIDTH OF A MOTOR HOME OR  
2 TRAVEL TRAILER SHALL BE EXCLUSIVE OF RETRACTABLE AWNINGS INSTALLED BY  
3 THE VEHICLE MANUFACTURER OR DEALER, PROVIDED THAT THE AWNINGS DO NOT  
4 EXTEND MORE THAN 6 INCHES FROM EACH SIDE OF THE VEHICLE.

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

6 (1) Farm equipment;

7 (2) Vehicle transporting farm equipment; or

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

11 (c) (1) [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION,  
12 A vehicle may not be driven on any highway if the width of the vehicle exceeds [the  
13 limits specified in this subsection] 102 INCHES unless:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34 (5) For any other vehicle, the width limit is 96 inches.

1 (d) By ordinance, a municipal corporation or Baltimore City may permit the  
2 operation in its jurisdiction of any bus that is not over 102 inches wide.]

3 (2) (I) NOTWITHSTANDING PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE  
4 STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION OR A LOCAL AUTHORITY MAY PROHIBIT THE USE  
5 OF A HIGHWAY OR PART OF A HIGHWAY UNDER ITS JURISDICTION BY A VEHICLE  
6 EXCEEDING A CERTAIN WIDTH IF IT FINDS THAT A VEHICLE EXCEEDING A CERTAIN  
7 WIDTH LIKELY WOULD:

- 8 1. ENDANGER ROAD USERS;
- 9 2. CAUSE EXCESSIVE DETERIORATION TO THE HIGHWAY; OR
- 10 3. HARM PROPERTY ADJACENT TO THE HIGHWAY.

11 (II) IF THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION OR A LOCAL  
12 AUTHORITY IMPOSES A VEHICLE WIDTH RESTRICTION UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF  
13 THIS SUBSECTION, IT SHALL PLACE AND MAINTAIN A SIGN PROVIDING NOTICE OF  
14 THE RESTRICTION BEFORE THE AFFECTED LOCATION.

15 24-104.1.

16 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

17 (2) "Automobiles" means all assembled motor vehicles:

- 18 (i) Capable of being operated on a highway; and
- 19 (ii) Authorized under this article to be operated on a highway.

20 (3) "Saddle-mount and full-mount combinations" means a truck tractor  
21 or unloaded truck towing 1 or more other truck tractors or unloaded trucks in  
22 combination.

23 (4) "Maxi-cube vehicle" means a nonarticulating straight truck:

- 24 (i) In combination with a semitrailer which does not exceed 34 feet,  
25 and is designed to be loaded and unloaded through the semitrailer; or
- 26 (ii) In combination with a trailer that does not exceed 28 feet.

27 (5) "Stinger-steered automobile transporter" means a truck tractor and  
28 semitrailer combination:

- 29 (i) Designed for and engaged exclusively in the transportation of  
30 automobiles or boats; and
- 31 (ii) In which the fifth wheel is located on a drop frame behind and  
32 below the rear axle of the power unit.

1 (b) (1) For purposes of this section, the length of a vehicle includes its front  
2 and rear bumpers and any part of its load that extends beyond the vehicle, but is  
3 exclusive of nonload bearing safety and energy conservation devices, such as marker  
4 lamps, steps and handholds for entry and egress, front-mounted refrigeration units,  
5 and front-mounted air compressors.

6 (2) The measurement of a combination of vehicles engaged in the  
7 transportation of automobiles or boats shall not include the overhang of the  
8 transported vehicles or boats or any retractable device on the rear of the combination  
9 when in use to support a transported vehicle.

10 (c) (1) This section does not apply to any vehicle or combination of vehicles  
11 carrying:

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

13 (ii) Crew or racing shells.

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

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

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

20 (2) The length of a [bus on any highway that is part of the interstate  
21 system or State primary system may not exceed 45 feet.] BUS, OTHER THAN A  
22 PUBLICLY OWNED RIGID BUS OR A CLASS M MOTOR HOME MAY NOT EXCEED 45 FEET  
23 BUT MAY EXCEED 40 FEET IF IT IS BEING OPERATED ON:

24 (I) ANY PART OF THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM OR THE  
25 STATE PRIMARY SYSTEM; OR

26 (II) THE SHORTEST PRACTICAL ROUTE BETWEEN AN INTERSTATE  
27 HIGHWAY OR A STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAY AND:

28 1. ITS POINT OF ORIGIN OR DESTINATION FOR A  
29 PARTICULAR DAY; OR

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

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

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

35 (h) When a semitrailer and a trailer (double) are being operated in  
36 combination with a truck tractor, the combination of vehicles shall not be subject to

1 an overall length limitation. This combination may only be operated on any part of  
2 the interstate system or other State system highways that are designated by the  
3 Secretary in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Transportation, or on a  
4 highway that is the shortest practical route between a designated highway and a  
5 truck terminal, or point of origin/destination for cargo, or for a distance not to exceed  
6 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel, repairs, or rest. A semitrailer or trailer being operated  
7 in this combination may not exceed 28 feet in length for each unit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

31 1. A truck terminal;

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

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

35 (j-1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (j) of this section, when a  
36 semitrailer is being operated in combination with a power unit that is equipped with

1 a dromedary box being used to transport explosives and munitions classified under 49  
2 C.F.R. Part 173.50 that are intended for use by the United States Department of  
3 Defense, the combination of vehicles is not subject to an overall length limit, but the  
4 semitrailer may not exceed 48 feet in length.

5 (k) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (h) of this section,  
6 nothing shall prevent the operation of a combination of vehicles in which the  
7 semitrailer (single) does not exceed 48 1/2 feet in length or a combination of vehicles in  
8 which the semitrailer or trailer (double) does not exceed 28 1/2 feet in length for each  
9 unit; provided, the combination has been lawfully operated on the highways of this  
10 State prior to December 1, 1982.

11 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (j)(1) of this section,  
12 nothing shall prevent a power unit, which was equipped with a dromedary box, deck,  
13 or plate and was legally operated in Maryland prior to December 1, 1982, in  
14 combination with a semitrailer or trailer from exceeding the overall length limit of 55  
15 feet.

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

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

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

19 (2) Notwithstanding the overall length of the combination, a truck  
20 tractor may not be operated on a highway in the State in combination with more than  
21 2 vehicles.

22 (m) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, a combination of  
23 noncommercial vehicles consisting of a power unit and a travel trailer may not exceed  
24 [60] 65 feet in length.

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

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

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

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

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

35 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
36 October 1, 2005.