

By: Wentworth

S.B. No. 1715

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to motor vehicle lighting equipment and compulsory inspection.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 547.323, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsection (c), renumbering the remaining subsections, and adding subsection (h) to read as follows:

Sec. 547.323. STOPLAMPS REQUIRED. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer shall be equipped with at least two stoplamps.

(b) A passenger car manufactured or assembled before the model year 1960 shall be equipped with at least one stoplamp.

(c) A passenger car manufactured after model year 1986, and each multipurpose passenger vehicle, truck, and bus, whose overall width is less than 80 inches, whose GVWR is 10,000 pounds or less, manufactured after 1994 shall be equipped with a centrally located, high-mounted stoplamp.

(d) Stoplamps [~~A stoplamp~~] shall be mounted on the rear of the vehicle.

(e) [~~(d)~~] Stoplamps [~~A stoplamp~~] shall emit a red or amber light, or a color between red and amber, that is:

(1) visible in normal sunlight at a distance of at least 300 feet from the rear of the vehicle; and

(2) illuminates only upon application of the service

1 brakes and continuously illuminates as long as the service brakes
2 are applied [~~displayed when the vehicle service brake is applied~~].

3 (f) [~~(e)~~] If vehicles are traveling in combination, only
4 the stoplamps on the rearmost vehicle are required to emit a light
5 for the distance specified in Subsection (e) [~~(d)~~].

6 (g) [(f)] Stoplamps [~~A stoplamp~~] may be included as a part
7 of another rear lamp.

8 (h) The observable illuminated area of a stoplamp shall not
9 be less than required under a rule adopted by the department or the
10 federal lighting standard.

11 SECTION 2. Section 547.324, Transportation Code, is amended
12 by adding subsection (f) to read as follows:

13 Sec. 547.324. TURN SIGNAL LAMPS REQUIRED. (f) The
14 observable illuminated area of a turn signal lamp shall not be less
15 than required under a rule adopted by the department or the federal
16 lighting standard.

17 SECTION 3. Subchapter E, Chapter 548, Transportation Code,
18 is amended by adding Section 547.336 to read as follows:

19 Sec. 547.336. Prohibition of Decorative and Ancillary
20 Lighting. (a) A person commits an offense that is a misdemeanor if
21 the person operates or moves a vehicle displaying a lamp, lighting,
22 reflective devices, and/or associated equipment not required or
23 authorized by this subtitle or a federal lighting standard, if any,
24 at the time the vehicle was manufactured.

25 (b) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that
26 the lamp, lighting equipment, and/or associated equipment
27 prohibited by subsection (a) was not illuminated while operating on

1 a public highway, or if illuminated the lamp or light source is not
2 directly visible on the exterior of the vehicle.

3 SECTION 4. Section 548.602(a), Transportation Code, is
4 amended to read as follows:

5 (a) After the fifth day after the date of expiration of the
6 period designated for inspection, a person may not operate:

7 (1) a motor vehicle registered in this state unless a
8 current, valid, and appropriate inspection certificate is
9 displayed on the vehicle; or

10 (2) a commercial motor vehicle registered in this
11 state unless it is equipped as required by federal motor carrier
12 safety regulations and displays an inspection certificate issued
13 under the program established under Section 548.201.

14 SECTION 5. (a) This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

15 (b) The change in law made by this Act applies only to an
16 offense committed on or after September 1, 2003. An offense that
17 was committed before September 1, 2003, is governed by the law in
18 effect on the date the offense was committed, and the former law is
19 continued in effect for that purpose.