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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 274 (as enacted)
Sponsor: Senator Rick Jones
Senate Committee: Transportation
House Committee: Transportation and Infrastructure

PUBLIC ACT 208 of 2015

Date Completed: 1-12-17

CONTENT

The bill amended the Michigan Vehicle Code to increase the maximum allowable length of certain vehicle combinations using a tow bar or saddle mounts on a designated highway, and establish a maximum length of vehicle combinations that have a front and rear overhang on the trailer and are transporting assembled motor vehicles or bodies.

Section 719 of the Code prohibits the operation on a Michigan highway of vehicles and vehicle combinations that exceed "normal length maximums" established in that section. A person who violates Section 719 is responsible for a civil infraction. The Michigan Department of Transportation or a local authority may designate a highway under its jurisdiction to allow the operation of vehicles that exceed the normal length maximums, subject to other limits.

For more than one motor vehicle, wholly or partially assembled, in combination, using one tow bar or three saddle mounts with full mount mechanisms and using the motive power of one of the vehicles in combination, the normal length maximum is 55 feet. On a highway designated by the Department or a local authority where the operation may exceed the normal length maximum, the maximum length of such a vehicle combination previously was 75 feet. The bill increased that length to 97 feet.

In addition, Section 719 prescribes a normal length maximum of 65 feet for various vehicle combinations that are designed and used exclusively to transport assembled motor vehicles or bodies, recreational vehicles, or boats. The load on the vehicle combination may extend an additional three feet beyond the front and four feet beyond the rear of the combination. Retractable extensions used to support and secure the load that do not extend beyond the allowable overhang for the front and rear must not be included in determining the length of a loaded vehicle or vehicle combination.

Under the bill, notwithstanding any other provision of Section 719, a combination of a truck and semitrailer, or truck tractor and semitrailer, used exclusively to transport assembled motor vehicles or bodies that have a trailer length of 53 feet may have a load that extends an additional three feet beyond the front of the trailer and four feet beyond the rear of the trailer. Retractable extensions used to support and secure the load that do not extend beyond the allowable overhang must not be included in determining the length of a loaded vehicle or vehicle combination. The total overall length loaded of the combination of vehicles must not exceed 79 feet.

The bill took effect on February 28, 2016.

MCL 257.719

Legislative Analyst: Suzanne Lowe

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill could decrease civil infraction fine revenue, which is dedicated to public libraries under the Vehicle Code. To the extent that vehicles previously were fined for having a length greater than the maximum specified in the Code, they are no longer subject to a civil infraction penalty under the circumstances described in the bill.

Fiscal Analyst: John Maxwell

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.