



Senate Fiscal Agency  
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## BILL ANALYSIS



Telephone: (517) 373-5383  
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Senate Bill 159 (as introduced 2-15-17)  
Sponsor: Senator Tom Casperson  
Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 3-8-17

**CONTENT**

**The bill would amend Section 722 of the Michigan Vehicle Code to allow a vehicle that was operated by an engine fueled by compressed or liquefied natural gas to exceed certain axle loading maximums and weight load maximums by an amount determined under the bill, but not by more than 2,000 pounds.**

Section 722 prescribes maximum axle loads and gross vehicle weights for various configurations of vehicles. Except as otherwise provided, the maximum axle load may not exceed a designated number of pounds (known as the normal loading maximum) based on the distance between axles.

When normal loading is in effect, the Michigan Department of Transportation, or a local authority with respect to highways under its jurisdiction, may designate certain highways, or sections of those highways, where bridges and road surfaces are adequate for heavier loading, and revise a designation as needed, on which the maximum tandem axle assembly loading may not exceed certain limits, depending on the combination of vehicles, the number of axles, and the distance between them.

In addition, Section 722 specifies loading maximums that apply to interstate highways, and allows the Michigan Department of Transportation, or a local authority with respect to highways under its jurisdiction, to designate a highway, or a section of a highway, for the operation of certain vehicles that are subject to those load maximums.

Under the bill, notwithstanding any other provision in Section 722, a vehicle operated by an engine that was fueled wholly or partially by compressed or liquefied natural gas could exceed the axle loading maximums and weight load maximums by an amount equal to the difference between the weight of the vehicle attributable to the natural gas tank and fueling system carried by that vehicle and the weight of a comparable diesel tank and fueling system. The amount by which the vehicle could exceed the axle loading maximums and weight load maximums could not be more than 2,000 pounds.

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

MCL 257.722

Legislative Analyst: Drew Krogulecki

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have no fiscal impact on the State and could have a minimal positive fiscal impact on local government. A violation of the size or weight limitations in the Code is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for up to 90 days or a fine of up to \$500, or both.

The provisions of the bill could reduce the number of misdemeanors for violations of the weight maximum. Any reduction in misdemeanor arrests and convictions could reduce resource demands on law enforcement, court systems, community supervision, and jails. Any associated decrease in fine revenue would reduce funding to public libraries.

Fiscal Analyst: Ryan Bergan

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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.