



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 73

January Session, 2001

Senate Bill No. 1187

Senate, March 29, 2001

The Committee on Judiciary reported through SEN. COLEMAN of the 2nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 14-283 of the general statutes is repealed and the following
2 is substituted in lieu thereof:

3 (a) "Emergency vehicle", as used in this section, means any
4 ambulance or emergency medical service organization vehicle
5 responding to an emergency call, any vehicle used by a fire
6 department or by any officer of a fire department while on the way to
7 a fire or while responding to an emergency call but not while returning
8 from a fire or emergency call, [or] any state or local police vehicle
9 operated by a police officer or inspector of the Department of Motor
10 Vehicles answering an emergency call or in the pursuit of fleeing law
11 violators or any Department of Correction vehicle operated by a
12 Department of Correction officer while in the course of such officer's
13 employment and while responding to an emergency call.

14 (b) The operator of any emergency vehicle may (1) park or stand
15 such vehicle, irrespective of the provisions of this chapter, (2) proceed
16 past any red light or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing
17 down or stopping to the extent necessary for the safe operation of such
18 vehicle, (3) exceed the posted speed limits or other speed limits
19 imposed by or pursuant to section 14-218a or 14-219 as long as [he]
20 such operator does not endanger life or property by so doing, and (4)
21 disregard statutes, ordinances or regulations governing direction of
22 movement or turning in specific directions.

23 (c) The exemptions herein granted shall apply only when an
24 emergency vehicle is making use of an audible warning signal device,
25 including but not limited to a siren, whistle or bell which meets the
26 requirements of subsection (f) of section 14-80, and visible flashing or
27 revolving lights which meet the requirements of sections 14-96p and
28 14-96q, and to any state or local police vehicle properly and lawfully
29 making use of an audible warning signal device only.

30 (d) The provisions of this section shall not relieve the operator of an
31 emergency vehicle from the duty to drive with due regard for the
32 safety of all persons and property.

33 (e) Upon the immediate approach of an emergency vehicle making
34 use of such an audible warning signal device and such visible flashing
35 or revolving lights or of any state or local police vehicle properly and
36 lawfully making use of an audible warning signal device only, the
37 operator of every other vehicle in the immediate vicinity shall
38 immediately drive to a position parallel to, and as close as possible to,
39 the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway clear of any intersection
40 and shall stop and remain in such position until the emergency vehicle
41 has passed, except when otherwise directed by a state or local police
42 officer or fireman as provided in section 7-313a.

43 (f) Any officer of a fire department may remove, or cause to be
44 removed, any vehicle upon any public or private way which obstructs

45 or retards any fire department, or any officer thereof, in controlling or
46 extinguishing any fire.

47 (g) Any person who wilfully or negligently obstructs or retards any
48 ambulance or emergency medical service organization vehicle while
49 answering any emergency call or taking a patient to a hospital, or any
50 vehicle used by a fire department or any officer or member of a fire
51 department while on the way to a fire, or while responding to an
52 emergency call, or any vehicle used by the state police or any local
53 police department, or any officer of the Division of State Police within
54 the Department of Public Safety or any local police department while
55 on the way to an emergency call or in the pursuit of fleeing law
56 violators, shall be fined not more than fifty dollars or imprisoned not
57 more than seven days or both.

58 (h) Nothing in this section shall be construed as permitting the use
59 of a siren upon any motor vehicle other than an emergency vehicle, as
60 defined in subsection (a) of this section, or a rescue service vehicle
61 which is registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to
62 section 19a-181.

JUD *Joint Favorable*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Affected Agencies: Departments of Correction, and Motor Vehicles

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

State Impact:

This bill adds Department of Correction vehicles responding to an emergency call during the course of employment of a correction officer to the list of statutorily-defined “emergency vehicles.”

Since passage of this bill would conform with the Department of Correction’s current practice, it would have no fiscal impact.

OLR Bill Analysis

SB 1187

AN ACT CONCERNING EMERGENCY VEHICLES.**SUMMARY:**

This bill classifies Department of Correction (DOC) vehicles operated by DOC officers in the course of their employment and responding to emergency calls as emergency vehicles. By doing so, it allows them to:

1. park or stand the vehicles in a manner that would normally violate the law,
2. go past red lights and stop signs after slowing down,
3. exceed the speed limit as long as it does not endanger life or property, and
4. disregard laws on traffic direction and turning.

The operator must drive with due regard for the safety of people and property. The vehicle must use a siren or similar device and flashing or revolving lights that meet certain standards. A motor vehicle operator in the immediate area of an approaching emergency vehicle using a siren and flashing lights must pull over to the right-hand edge of the road until the vehicle has passed.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2001

BACKGROUND***Emergency Vehicles***

Under current law, emergency vehicles are:

1. ambulances or emergency medical service organization vehicles

responding to emergency calls,

2. vehicles used by a fire department or one of its officers on the way to a fire or responding to an emergency call, and
3. police vehicles operated by police officers or Department of Motor Vehicles inspectors answering emergency calls or pursuing fleeing law violators.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 37 Nay 0