

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2009

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SENATE BILL 1000  
House Committee Substitute Favorable 5/27/09

Short Title: Motor Vehicle Size and Weight Law Changes.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 26, 2009

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO RESTRICT THE OVERALL LENGTH OF A SINGLE VEHICLE WITH TWO  
3 OR MORE AXLES TO FORTY FEET, TO REQUIRE THAT VEHICLES  
4 TRANSPORTING EQUIPMENT OR POLES FOR EMERGENCY UTILITY REPAIR AT  
5 NIGHT HAVE TRAILERS THAT ARE NO LONGER THAN FIFTY-THREE FEET, TO  
6 INCREASE THE MAXIMUM LENGTH FOR A COMBINATION OF A HOUSE  
7 TRAILER USED AS A MOBILE HOME WITH ITS TOWING VEHICLE FROM  
8 FIFTY-FIVE TO SIXTY FEET, AND TO MAKE CERTAIN FARM VEHICLES BE  
9 SELF-PROPELLED.

10 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

11 SECTION 1. G.S. 20-116 reads as rewritten:

12 "§ 20-116. Size of vehicles and loads.

13 ...

14 (d) Maximum Length. – The following maximum lengths apply to vehicles. A  
15 truck-tractor and semitrailer shall be regarded as two vehicles for the purpose of determining  
16 lawful length and license taxes.

17 (1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a single vehicle having two  
18 or ~~three~~ more axles shall not exceed 40 feet in length overall of dimensions  
19 inclusive of front and rear bumpers.

20 (2) Trucks transporting unprocessed cotton from farm to gin shall not exceed 50  
21 feet in length overall of dimensions inclusive of front and rear bumpers.

22 (3) Recreational vehicles shall not exceed 45 feet in length overall, excluding  
23 bumpers and mirrors.

24 (e) Except as provided by G.S. 20-115.1, no combination of vehicles coupled together  
25 shall consist of more than two units and no such combination of vehicles shall exceed a total  
26 length of 60 feet inclusive of front and rear bumpers, subject to the following exceptions:  
27 Motor vehicle combinations of one semitrailer of not more than 53 feet in length and a truck  
28 tractor (power unit) may exceed the 60-foot maximum length. Said maximum overall length  
29 limitation shall not apply to vehicles operated in the daytime when transporting poles, pipe,  
30 machinery or other objects of a structural nature which cannot readily be dismembered, nor to  
31 such vehicles transporting such objects operated at nighttime by a public utility when required  
32 for emergency repair of public service facilities or ~~properties, properties,~~ provided the trailer  
33 length does not exceed 53 feet in length, but in respect to such night transportation every such  
34 vehicle and the load thereon shall be equipped with a sufficient number of clearance lamps on  
35 both sides and marker lamps upon the extreme ends of said projecting load to clearly mark the  
36 dimensions of such load: Provided that vehicles designed and used exclusively for the  
37 transportation of motor vehicles shall be permitted an overhang tolerance front or rear not to



1 exceed five feet. Provided, that wreckers may tow a truck, combination tractor and trailer,  
2 trailer, or any other disabled vehicle or combination of vehicles to a place for repair, parking, or  
3 storage within 50 miles of the point where the vehicle was disabled and may tow a truck,  
4 tractor, or other replacement vehicle to the site of the disabled vehicle. ~~Provided, however, that~~  
5 ~~a combination of a house trailer used as a mobile home, together with its towing vehicle, shall~~  
6 ~~not exceed a total length of 55 feet exclusive of front and rear bumpers.~~ Provided further, that  
7 the said limitation that no combination of vehicles coupled together shall consist of more than  
8 two units shall not apply to trailers not exceeding three in number drawn by a motor vehicle  
9 used by municipalities for the removal of domestic and commercial refuse and street rubbish,  
10 but such combination of vehicles shall not exceed a total length of 50 feet inclusive of front and  
11 rear bumpers. Provided further, that the said limitation that no combination of vehicles coupled  
12 together shall consist of more than two units shall not apply to a combination of vehicles  
13 coupled together by a saddle mount device used to transport motor vehicles in a driveway  
14 service when no more than three saddle mounts are used and provided further, that equipment  
15 used in said combination is approved by the safety regulations of the Federal Highway  
16 Administration and the safety rules of the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety.

17 ...

18 (j) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the operation of self-propelled  
19 grain combines or other farm equipment self-propelled, ~~pulled, or otherwise,~~ not exceeding 25  
20 feet in width on any highway, except a highway or section of highway that is a fully controlled  
21 access highway or is a part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. Farm  
22 equipment includes a vehicle that is designed exclusively to transport compressed seed cotton  
23 from a farm to a gin and has a self-loading bed. Combines or equipment which exceed 10 feet  
24 in width may be operated only if they meet all of the conditions listed in this subsection. A  
25 violation of one or more of these conditions does not constitute negligence per se.

26 ...."

27 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2009, and applies to  
28 offenses committed on or after that date.