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3 ALLEN SUBSTITUTE FOR SB55
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8 SYNOPSIS: Existing law provides for size and weight
9 restrictions on certain vehicles operating in
10 Alabama.

11 This bill would specify that refuse trucks
12 would be included in the types of trucks not
13 required to conform to the axle spacing
14 requirements of this law or to the gross weight
15 restrictions on one axle, and would allow motor
16 vehicle weight increases for vehicles that have
17 conversion equipment installed allowing the vehicle
18 to operate on compressed natural gas or compressed
19 liquefied gas.
20

21 A BILL
22 TO BE ENTITLED
23 AN ACT
24

25 To amend Section 32-9-20, Code of Alabama 1975, as
26 last amended by Act 2016-190, 2016 Regular Session, relating
27 to weight restrictions on the operation of certain motor

1 vehicles; to specify that refuse trucks would be included in
2 the types of trucks not required to conform to the axle
3 spacing requirements of this section or to certain gross
4 weight restrictions on one axle, and to allow for weight
5 increases for vehicles having conversion equipment installed
6 that allows the vehicle to operate on compressed natural gas
7 or compressed liquefied gas.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

9 Section 1. Section 32-9-20, Code of Alabama 1975, as
10 last amended by Act 2016-190, 2016 Regular Session, is amended
11 to read as follows:

12 "§32-9-20.

13 "(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to drive or
14 move on any highway in this state any vehicle or vehicles of a
15 size or weight except in accordance with the following:

16 "(1) WIDTH. Vehicles and combinations of vehicles,
17 operating on highways with traffic lanes 12 feet or more in
18 width, shall not exceed a total outside width, including any
19 load thereon, of 102 inches, exclusive of mirrors or other
20 safety devices approved by the State Transportation
21 Department. The Director of the State Transportation
22 Department may, in his or her discretion, designate other
23 public highways for use by vehicles and loads with total
24 outside widths not exceeding 102 inches, otherwise; vehicles
25 and combinations of vehicles, operating on highways with
26 traffic lanes less than 12 feet in width, shall not exceed a
27 total outside width, including any load thereon, of 96 inches,

1 exclusive of mirrors or other safety devices approved by the
2 State Transportation Department. No passenger vehicle shall
3 carry any load extending beyond the line of the fenders. No
4 vehicle hauling forest products or culvert pipe on any highway
5 in this state shall have a load exceeding 102 inches in width.

6 "(2) HEIGHT. No vehicle or semitrailer or trailer
7 shall exceed in height 13 1/2 feet, including load.

8 "(3) LENGTH. No vehicle shall exceed in length 40
9 feet; except, that the length of a truck-semitrailer
10 combination, semitrailers, including load, used in a truck
11 tractor-semitrailer combination, shall not exceed 57 feet;
12 semitrailers and trailers, including load, used in a truck
13 tractor-semitrailer-trailer combination, shall not exceed 28
14 1/2 feet each; and motor vehicles designed, used, or
15 maintained primarily as a mobile dwelling, office, or
16 commercial space, commonly called motor homes, shall not
17 exceed 45 feet. Semitrailers exceeding 53 1/2 feet shall only
18 be operated on highways designated pursuant to Section 32-9-1
19 and shall only be operated when the distance between the
20 kingpin of the semitrailer and the rearmost axle or a point
21 midway between the two rear axles, if the two rear axles are
22 tandem axles, does not exceed 41 feet and if the semitrailer
23 is equipped with a rear underride guard of a substantial
24 construction consisting of a continuous lateral beam extending
25 to within four inches of the lateral extremities of the
26 semitrailer and located not more than 22 inches from the
27 surface as measured with the semitrailers empty and on a level

1 surface. For purposes of enforcement of this subdivision,
2 lengths of semitrailers and trailers refer to the cargo
3 carrying portion of the unit. Truck tractor units used
4 exclusively in combinations transporting motor vehicles may
5 directly carry a portion of the cargo, provided that the
6 combinations are restricted to truck tractor-semitrailer
7 combinations only and provided further that the overall length
8 of these particular combinations shall not exceed 65 feet;
9 except that the overall length of stinger-steered type units
10 shall not exceed ~~75~~ 80 feet. No truck tractor-semitrailer
11 combination used exclusively for transporting motor vehicles
12 shall carry any load extending more than ~~three~~ four feet
13 beyond the front or ~~four~~ six feet beyond the rear of the
14 combination. No other vehicle operated on a highway shall
15 carry any load extending more than a total of five feet beyond
16 both the front and rear, inclusive, of the vehicle.

17 "(4) WEIGHT.

18 "a. The gross weight imposed on the highway by the
19 wheels of any one axle of a vehicle shall not exceed 20,000
20 pounds, or such other weight, if any, as may be permitted by
21 federal law to keep the state from losing federal funds;
22 provided, that inadequate bridges shall be posted to define
23 load limits.

24 "b. For the purpose of this section, an axle load
25 shall be defined as the total load transmitted to the road by
26 all wheels whose centers are included between two parallel

1 transverse vertical planes 40 inches apart, extending across
2 the full width of the vehicle.

3 "c. Subject to the limit upon the weight imposed
4 upon the highway through any one axle as set forth herein, the
5 total weight with load imposed upon the highway by all the
6 axles of a vehicle or combination of vehicles shall not exceed
7 the gross weight given for the respective distances between
8 the first and last axle of the vehicle or combination of vehi-
9 cles, measured longitudinally to the nearest foot as set forth
10 in the following table:

11 COMPUTED GROSS WEIGHT TABLE

12 For various spacings of axle groupings

13 Distance in feet between first Maximum load in
14 and last axles of vehicle or pounds on all the
15 combination of vehicles axles

	2 axles	3 axles	4 axles	5 axles	6 axles
16					
17	8 or	36,000	42,000	42,000	
18	less				
19	9	38,000	42,500	42,500	
20	10	40,000	43,500	43,500	
21	11		44,000	44,000	

1	12	45,000	50,000	50,000	
2	13	45,500	50,500	50,500	
3	14	46,500	51,500	51,500	
4	15	47,000	52,000	52,000	
5	16	48,000	52,500	58,000	58,000
6	17	48,500	53,500	58,500	58,500
7	18	49,500	54,000	59,000	59,000
8	19	50,000	54,500	60,000	60,000
9	20	51,000	55,500	60,500	66,000
10	21	51,500	56,000	61,000	66,500
11	22	52,500	56,500	61,500	67,000
12	23	53,000	57,500	62,500	68,000
13	24	54,000	58,000	63,000	68,500
14	25	54,500	58,500	63,500	69,000
15	26	56,000	59,500	64,000	69,500
16	27	57,000	60,000	65,000	70,000
17	28	59,000	60,500	65,500	71,000
18	29	60,000	61,500	66,000	71,500
19	30		62,000	66,500	72,000
20	31		63,500	67,000	72,500
21	32		64,500	68,000	73,500
22	33		65,000	69,000	74,000

1	34	65,500	70,000	74,500
2	35	66,500	71,000	75,000
3	36	67,000	72,000	76,000
4	37	68,000	73,000	77,000
5	38	69,000	74,000	78,000
6	39	70,000	75,000	79,000
7	40	71,000	76,000	80,000
8	41	72,000	77,000	81,000
9	42	73,000	78,000	82,000
10	43	74,000	79,000	83,000
11	44 and	75,000	80,000	84,000
12	over			

13 "Except as provided by special permits, no vehicle
14 or combination of vehicles exceeding the gross weights
15 specified above shall be permitted to travel on the public
16 highways within the State of Alabama.

17 "No vehicle or combination of vehicles shall be per-
18 mitted to operate on any portion of the Interstate Highway
19 System of Alabama that shall have a greater weight than 20,000
20 pounds carried on any one axle, including all enforcement tol-
21 erances, or with a tandem axle weight in excess of 34,000
22 pounds, including all enforcement tolerances, or with an over-

1 all gross weight on a group of two or more consecutive axles
2 produced by application of the following formula:

$$3 \quad W=500 \quad LN \quad + \quad 12N \quad + \quad 36$$
$$4 \quad \quad \quad \quad N-1$$

5 where W = overall gross weight on any group of two
6 or more consecutive axles to the nearest 500 pounds, L =
7 distance in feet between the extreme of any group of two or
8 more consecutive axles, and N = number of axles in group under
9 consideration; except, that two consecutive sets of tandem
10 axles may carry a gross load of 34,000 pounds each, provided
11 the overall distance between the first and last axles of the
12 consecutive sets of tandem axles is 36 feet or more; provided,
13 that the overall gross weight may not exceed 80,000 pounds,
14 including all enforcement tolerances. Nothing in this section
15 shall be construed as permitting size or weight limits on the
16 National System of Interstate and Defense Highways in this
17 state in excess of those permitted under 23 U.S.C. Section
18 127. If the federal government prescribes or adopts vehicle
19 size or weight limits greater than or less than those now
20 prescribed by 23 U.S.C. Section 127 for the National System of
21 Interstate and Defense Highways, the increased or decreased
22 limits shall become effective on the National System of
23 Interstate and Defense Highways in this state. Nothing in this
24 section shall be construed to deny the operation of any

1 vehicle or combination of vehicles that could be lawfully
2 operated upon the highways and roads of this state on January
3 4, 1975.

4 "d. For purposes of enforcement of this subdivision,
5 all weights less than or equal to the sum of the weight
6 otherwise prescribed by this subdivision, plus an additional
7 weight to be calculated by multiplying the weight prescribed
8 by this subdivision by one-tenth (.10) that shall represent a
9 scale or enforcement tolerance, shall be deemed to be in
10 compliance with the requirements of this section, and shall
11 not constitute violations thereof. No evidence shall be
12 admitted into evidence or considered by the trier of fact in
13 any civil action unless the evidence proffered would tend to
14 prove that the weight of the vehicle exceeded the amount
15 provided in this subsection. Nothing in this paragraph d.
16 shall restrict or affect the right of any defendant to place
17 in evidence such evidence tending to prove the defendant was
18 in compliance with this section.

19 "e. Dump trucks, dump trailers, concrete mixing
20 trucks, fuel oil, gasoline trucks, refuse trucks, and trucks
21 designated and constructed for special type work or use shall
22 not be made to conform to the axle spacing requirements of
23 paragraph (4)c of this section; provided, that the vehicle
24 shall be limited to a weight of 20,000 pounds per axle plus
25 scale tolerances; and, provided further, that the maximum
26 gross weight of the vehicles shall not exceed the maximum
27 weight allowed by this section for the appropriate number of

1 axles, irrespective of the distance between axles, plus
2 allowable scale tolerances. All axles shall be brake equipped.
3 Trucks delivering asphalt plant mix which do not exceed the
4 maximum allowable gross weight and operate within 50 miles of
5 their home base shall not be required to conform to the
6 requirements of paragraph (4)a of this section. Concrete
7 mixing trucks and refuse trucks which operate within 50 miles
8 of their home base and do not exceed the maximum allowable
9 gross weight shall not be required to conform to the
10 requirements of paragraph (4)a of this section. It shall be a
11 violation if the vehicles named under this subdivision travel
12 upon bridges designated and posted by the Transportation
13 Director as incapable of carrying the load.

14 "f. If the driver of any vehicle can comply with the
15 weight requirements of this section by shifting or equalizing
16 the load on all wheels or axles and does so when requested by
17 the proper authority, the driver shall not be held to be
18 operating in violation of this section.

19 "g. When portable scales are used in the enforcement
20 of this section, the axles of any vehicle described or
21 commonly referred to as tandem or triaxle rigs or units (that
22 is, vehicles having two or more axles in addition to a
23 steering axle), the group of tandem or triaxles shall be
24 weighed simultaneously, and the total weight so derived shall
25 be divided by the number of axles weighed in the group to
26 arrive at the per axle weight, except that if any one axle in
27 the group exceeds 20,000 pounds in weight, it shall not exceed

1 the weight of any other axle in the group by more than 50
2 percent. When portable scales are used to determine the weight
3 of a vehicle pursuant to this section, the operator of the
4 vehicle will be permitted to move the vehicle to the nearest
5 platform scales certified by the Department of Agriculture and
6 Industries and operated by a bonded operator within a distance
7 of 10 highway miles, accompanied by an enforcement officer to
8 verify the accuracy of the portable scales used in determining
9 the vehicle weight. If the weight of the vehicle is shown by
10 the platform scales to be within the legal limits of this
11 section, the operator of the vehicle shall not be held to be
12 in violation of this section.

13 "h. The governing body of a county, by appropriate
14 resolution, may authorize limitations less than those
15 prescribed herein for vehicles operated upon the county
16 highways of the county.

17 "i. The State Transportation Department may post or
18 limit any road or bridge to weights less than those prescribed
19 by this section. It is the legislative intent and purpose that
20 this section be rigidly enforced by the State Transportation
21 Department, the Alabama State Law Enforcement Agency and any
22 other authorized law enforcement officers of the state, any
23 county, or city and incorporated towns.

24 "j. Two and three axle vehicles being used
25 exclusively for the purpose of transporting agricultural
26 commodities or products to and from a farm and for
27 agricultural purposes relating to the operation and

1 maintenance of a farm by any farmer, custom harvester or
2 husbandman may not be made to conform to the axle requirements
3 of paragraph (4)a of this section or the gross weight
4 requirements of paragraph (4)c of this section.

5 "(b) (1) Any vehicle utilizing an auxiliary power or
6 idle reduction technology unit in order to promote reduction
7 of fuel use and emissions because of engine idling shall be
8 allowed an additional 400 pounds total to the gross, axle,
9 tandem, or bridge formula weight limits defined in this
10 section.

11 "(2) To be eligible for the exception provided in
12 this subsection, the operator of the vehicle must provide
13 written proof or certification of the weight of the auxiliary
14 power unit (APU) and demonstrate or certify the idle reduction
15 technology is fully functional at all times.

16 "(3) Written proof or certification of the weight of
17 the APU must be available to law enforcement officers if the
18 vehicle is found in violation of applicable weight laws. The
19 weight allowed cannot exceed 400 pounds or the actual weight
20 proven or certified, whichever is less.

21 "(4) It is the intent of this subsection to apply at
22 the state highway level the weight limit increase for vehicles
23 using a functioning auxiliary power or idle reduction
24 technology as provided in the Federal Energy Policy Act of
25 2005.

26 "(c) (1) Any motor vehicle, if operated by an engine
27 fueled wholly or partially by compressed or liquefied natural

1 gas, may exceed the gross vehicle weight limits and any axle
2 weight limits by an amount, not to exceed a maximum of 2,000
3 pounds, that is equal to the difference between:

4 "a. The weight of the vehicle attributable to the
5 natural gas tank and fueling system carried by that vehicle;
6 and

7 "b. The weight of a comparable diesel tank and
8 fueling system.

9 "(2) The weight exemption allowed under this
10 subsection shall extend to all state and county roads and
11 shall also apply to interstate highways per the exemption
12 expressly permitted under Section 127(s) of Title 23 of the
13 United States Code, as amended by Section 1410 of the Fixing
14 America's Surface Transportation Act of 2015."

15 Section 2. This act shall become effective on the
16 first day of the third month following its passage and
17 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.