

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE BILL 355
Committee Substitute Favorable 4/7/05

Short Title: Restrict Use of Blue and Red Vehicle Lights.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 23, 2005

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO RESTRICT THE USE OF RED AND BLUE LIGHTS ON VEHICLES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 20-130.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-130.1. Use of red or blue lights on vehicles prohibited; exceptions.

(a) It is unlawful for any person to install or activate or operate a red light in or on any vehicle in this State. As used in this subsection, unless the context requires otherwise, "red light" means an operable red light not sealed in the manufacturer's original package which: (i) is designed for use by an emergency vehicle or is similar in appearance to a red light designed for use by an emergency vehicle; and (ii) can be operated by use of the vehicle's battery, vehicle's electrical system, or a dry cell battery. As used in this subsection, the term "red light" shall also mean any forward facing red light installed on a vehicle after initial manufacture of the vehicle.

(b) The provisions of subsection (a) of this section do not apply to the following:

- (1) A police car;
- (2) A highway patrol car;
- (3) A vehicle owned by the Wildlife Resources Commission and operated exclusively for law-enforcement purposes;
- (4) An ambulance;
- (5) A vehicle used by an organ procurement organization or agency for the recovery and transportation of blood, human tissues, or organs for transplantation;
- (6) A fire-fighting vehicle;
- (7) A school bus;
- (8) A vehicle operated by any member of a municipal or rural fire department in the performance of his duties, regardless of whether members of that fire department are paid or voluntary;
- (9) A vehicle of a voluntary lifesaving organization (including the private vehicles of the members of such an organization) that has been

1 officially approved by the local police authorities and which is manned
2 or operated by members of that organization while answering an
3 official call;

4 (10) A vehicle operated by medical doctors or anesthetists in emergencies;

5 (11) A motor vehicle used in law enforcement by the sheriff, or any salaried
6 rural policeman in any county, regardless of whether or not the county
7 owns the vehicle;

8 (11a) A vehicle operated by the State Fire Marshal or his representatives in
9 the performance of their duties, whether or not the State owns the
10 vehicle;

11 (12) A vehicle operated by any county fire marshal, assistant fire marshal,
12 or emergency management coordinator in the performance of his
13 duties, regardless of whether or not the county owns the vehicle;

14 (13) A light required by the Federal Highway Administration;

15 (14) A vehicle operated by a transplant coordinator who is an employee of
16 an organ procurement organization or agency when the transplant
17 coordinator is responding to a call to recover or transport human
18 tissues or organs for transplantation;

19 (15) A vehicle operated by an emergency medical service as an emergency
20 support vehicle; and

21 (16) A State emergency management vehicle.

22 (c) It is unlawful for any person to possess a blue light or to install, activate, or
23 operate a blue light in or on any vehicle in this State, except for a publicly owned
24 vehicle used for law enforcement purposes or any other vehicle when used by law
25 enforcement officers in the performance of their official duties. As used in this
26 subsection, unless the context requires otherwise, "blue light" means any forward facing
27 blue light installed on a vehicle after initial manufacture of the vehicle; or an operable
28 blue light which:

29 (1) Is not (i) being installed on, held in inventory for the purpose of being
30 installed on, or held in inventory for the purpose of sale for installation
31 on a vehicle on which it may be lawfully operated or (ii) installed on a
32 vehicle which is used solely for the purpose of demonstrating the blue
33 light for sale to law enforcement personnel;

34 (1a) Is designed for use by an emergency vehicle, or is similar in
35 appearance to a blue light designed for use by an emergency vehicle;
36 and

37 (2) Can be operated by use of the vehicle's battery, the vehicle's electrical
38 system, or a dry cell battery.

39 (d) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-249, s. 1.

40 (e) Violation of subsection (a) or (c) of this section is a Class 1 misdemeanor."

41 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2005, and applies to
42 offenses committed on or after that date.