

Introduced by Senator CorbettJanuary 14, 2013

An act to amend Section 35110 of, and to add Section 35405 to, the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 109, as introduced, Corbett. Vehicles: aerodynamic devices.

Existing law limits the length of vehicles and combinations of vehicles coupled together. Under existing law, any extension or device used to increase the carrying capacity of a vehicle is generally included in measuring the length of a vehicle, subject to certain exceptions.

This bill would exclude an aerodynamic device that extends no more than 5 feet beyond the rear of a vehicle from the calculation of a vehicle's length if the device meets specified conditions, including that the device does not obscure tail lamps, turn signals, marker lamps, identification lamps, or any other required safety devices.

Existing law limits the width of a vehicle to no more than 102 inches, with certain exceptions, including that a vehicle may have an aerodynamic device, as defined, that extends up to 3 inches beyond each side of the vehicle. Existing law prohibits an aerodynamic device from adversely impacting the vehicle's swept width and turning characteristics.

This bill would instead prohibit an aerodynamic device from affecting the vehicle's turning radius, as defined, or interfering with the vehicle's ability to complete a turn.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 35110 of the Vehicle Code is amended
 2 to read:

3 35110. (a) Door handles, hinges, cable cinchers, chain binders,
 4 aerodynamic devices, and holders for the display of placards
 5 warning of hazardous materials may extend three inches on each
 6 side of the vehicle.

7 (b) For purposes of this section, ~~“aerodynamic devices”~~ *section:*

8 (1) *“Aerodynamic device”* means ~~devices using a device that~~
 9 *uses* technologies that minimize drag and improve airflow over an
 10 entire tractor-trailer vehicle. These include gap fairings that reduce
 11 turbulence between the tractor and trailer, side skirts that minimize
 12 wind under the trailer, and rear fairings that reduce turbulence and
 13 pressure drop at the rear of the ~~trailer, provided that these devices~~
 14 ~~shall not adversely impact the vehicle’s swept width and turning~~
 15 ~~characteristics and that the primary purpose of the device is not~~
 16 ~~for advertising trailer. An aerodynamic device shall not have the~~
 17 *primary purpose of advertising and shall not affect the vehicle’s*
 18 *turning radius or interfere with the vehicle’s ability to complete*
 19 *a turn.*

20 (2) *“Turning radius”* means *the angle that the tractor can rotate*
 21 *relative to the trailer while completing a turn.*

22 SEC. 2. Section 35405 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

23 35405. An aerodynamic device that extends no more than five
 24 feet beyond the rear of a vehicle shall not be included in measuring
 25 the length of the vehicle or combination of vehicles, if both of the
 26 following conditions are met:

27 (a) The device does not have the strength, rigidity, or mass to
 28 damage a vehicle, or injure a passenger in a vehicle, that strikes
 29 the vehicle equipped with the device from the rear.

30 (b) The device does not obscure tail lamps, turn signals, marker
 31 lamps, identification lamps, or any other required safety devices,
 32 including, but not limited to, hazardous materials placards or
 33 conspicuity markings.

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