

Introduced by Senator Walters

February 20, 2014

An act to amend Section 35401.5 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1175, as introduced, Walters. Vehicles: length limitations: motorsports.

Existing law generally prohibits a vehicle from exceeding a length of 40 feet, and a combination of vehicles from exceeding a total length of 65 feet, with various specific exceptions. Existing law, until January 1, 2016, exempts from these provisions a combination of vehicles consisting of a truck tractor semitrailer combination with a kingpin to rearmost axle measurement limit of not more than 46 feet, a trailer length of not more than 56 feet, and used exclusively or primarily in connection with motorsports, as defined.

This bill would delete the January 1, 2016, date of repeal, thereby making these provisions operative indefinitely. The bill would also make technical, nonsubstantive changes to these provisions.

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 35401.5 of the Vehicle Code is amended
- 2 to read:
- 3 35401.5. (a) A combination of vehicles consisting of a truck
- 4 tractor and semitrailer, or of a truck tractor, semitrailer, and trailer,
- 5 is not subject to the limitations of Sections 35400 and 35401, when

1 operating on the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of
2 Interstate and Defense Highways or when using those portions of
3 federal-aid primary system highways that have been qualified by
4 the United States Secretary of Transportation for that use, or when
5 using routes appropriately identified by the Department of
6 Transportation or local authorities as provided in subdivision (c)
7 or (d), if all of the following conditions are met:

8 (1) The length of the semitrailer in exclusive combination with
9 a truck tractor does not exceed 48 feet. A semitrailer not more than
10 53 feet in length shall satisfy this requirement when configured
11 with two or more rear axles, the rearmost of which is located 40
12 feet or less from the kingpin or when configured with a single axle
13 which is located 38 feet or less from the kingpin. For purposes of
14 this paragraph, a motortruck used in combination with a semitrailer,
15 when that combination of vehicles is engaged solely in the
16 transportation of motor vehicles, camper units, or boats, is
17 considered to be a truck tractor.

18 (2) Neither the length of the semitrailer nor the length of the
19 trailer when simultaneously in combination with a truck tractor
20 exceeds 28 feet 6 inches.

21 (b) Subdivisions (b), (d), and (e) of Section 35402 do not apply
22 to combinations of vehicles operated subject to the exemptions
23 provided by this section.

24 (c) Combinations of vehicles operated pursuant to subdivision
25 (a) may also use highways not specified in subdivision (a) that
26 provide reasonable access to terminals and facilities for purposes
27 limited to fuel, food, lodging, and repair when that access is
28 consistent with the safe operation of the combinations of vehicles
29 and when the facility is within one road mile of identified points
30 of ingress and egress to or from highways specified in subdivision
31 (a) for use by those combinations of vehicles.

32 (d) The Department of Transportation or local authorities may
33 establish a process whereby access to terminals or services may
34 be applied for upon a route not previously established as an access
35 route. The denial of a request for access to terminals and services
36 shall be only on the basis of safety and an engineering analysis of
37 the proposed access route. If a written request for access has been
38 properly submitted and has not been acted upon within 90 days of
39 receipt by the department or the appropriate local agency, the
40 access shall be deemed automatically approved. Thereafter, the

1 route shall be deemed open for access by all other vehicles of the
2 same type regardless of ownership. In lieu of processing an access
3 application, the Department of Transportation or local authorities
4 with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions may
5 provide signing, mapping, or a listing of highways as necessary
6 to indicate the use of specific routes as terminal access routes. For
7 purposes of this subdivision, “terminal” means either of the
8 following:

9 (1) A facility where freight originates, terminates, or is handled
10 in the transportation process.

11 (2) A facility where a motor carrier maintains operating
12 facilities.

13 (e) Nothing in subdivision (c) or (d) authorizes state or local
14 agencies to require permits of terminal operators or to charge
15 terminal operators fees for the purpose of attaining access for
16 vehicles described in this section.

17 (f) Notwithstanding subdivision (d), the limitations of access
18 specified in that subdivision do not apply to licensed carriers of
19 household goods when directly enroute to or from a point of
20 loading or unloading of household goods, if travel on highways
21 other than those specified in subdivision (a) is necessary and
22 incidental to the shipment of the household goods.

23 (g) ~~(f)~~ Notwithstanding Sections 35400 and 35401, a
24 combination of vehicles consisting of a truck tractor semitrailer
25 combination with a kingpin to rearmost axle measurement limit
26 of not more than 46 feet, a trailer length of not more than 56 feet,
27 and used exclusively or primarily in connection with motorsports,
28 may operate on the routes identified in subdivision (a) as well as
29 on any other routes authorized for that purpose by the Department
30 of Transportation in consultation with the Department of the
31 California Highway Patrol. As used in this subdivision,
32 “motorsports” means an event, and all activities leading up to that
33 event, including, but not limited to, administration, testing, practice,
34 promotion, and merchandising, that is sanctioned under the
35 auspices of the member organizations of the Automobile
36 Competition Committee for the United States.

37 ~~(2) (A) The Department of Transportation shall conduct a field~~
38 ~~test of the tractor truck semitrailer combination authorized under~~
39 ~~paragraph (1) for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet~~
40 ~~to evaluate their performance on various segments of the National~~

1 ~~Network and transition routes. The Department of Transportation~~
2 ~~shall, no later than January 1, 2014, submit a report to the~~
3 ~~Legislature in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government~~
4 ~~Code that includes the results of the field test and a~~
5 ~~recommendation, in consultation with the Department of the~~
6 ~~California Highway Patrol, as to whether the 56-foot trailer length~~
7 ~~should be reauthorized.~~

8 ~~(B) Notwithstanding Section 10231.5 of the Government Code,~~
9 ~~the requirement for submitting a report under this paragraph is~~
10 ~~inoperative on January 1, 2018.~~

11 ~~(3) This subdivision shall remain in effect only until January 1,~~
12 ~~2016, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute,~~
13 ~~that is enacted before January 1, 2016, deletes or extends that date.~~

14 (h) The Legislature finds and declares both of the following:

15 (1) In authorizing the use of 53-foot semitrailers, it is the intent
16 of the Legislature to conform with Section 31111(b)(1)(C) of Title
17 49 of the United States Code by permitting the continued use of
18 semitrailers of the dimensions as those that were in actual and legal
19 use on December 1, 1982, and does not intend this action to be a
20 precedent for future increases in the parameters of any of those
21 vehicles that would adversely affect the turning maneuverability
22 of vehicle combinations.

23 (2) In authorizing the department to issue special transportation
24 permits for motorsports, it is the intent of the Legislature to
25 conform with Section 31111(b)(1)(F) of Title 49 of the United
26 States Code. It is also the intent of the Legislature that this action
27 not be a precedent for future increases in the distance from the
28 kingpin to the rearmost axle of semitrailers and trailers that would
29 adversely affect the turning maneuverability of vehicle
30 combinations.