

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 25, 2014

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 12, 2014

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 29, 2014

SENATE BILL

No. 1175

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 amended, 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 extend the operation of that exemption to ~~January 1, 2018~~ indefinitely. *In order to comply with the terms of that exemption, the bill would require a permit issued by the Department of Transportation for the operation of that combination of vehicles on a specific route.* The bill would require the Department of Transportation to conduct field tests of the truck tractor semitrailer combination for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet to evaluate their performance on all segments of interstate highways and transition routes

connecting to sanctioned motorsport racecourses, except for the Pomona Raceway and the Sonoma Raceway. The bill would require, on or before January 1, 2018, the department to make the needed roadway improvements identified in the field tests and for the Pomona Raceway and the Sonoma Raceway to accommodate the truck tractor semitrailer combination for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet. *The bill would provide that a permit to operate the above-described combination of vehicles on a specific route would be required until either field tests by the Department of Transportation determine that no additional projects need to be performed on that particular route, or, if projects are required to be performed on the route, until those projects are completed.* The bill would require the department to update the transition routes to reflect road projects completed since the 1990s and to update the transition routes every 5 years thereafter. The bill would require the department to develop new transition routes for the truck tractor semitrailer combination for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet. The bill would require, no later than January 1, 2017, the department to submit a report to the Legislature that includes the results of the field tests, an overview of the related roadway improvements identified and made, and, in consultation with the Department of the California Highway Patrol, a recommendation as to whether the 56 foot trailer length should be reauthorized. The bill would also make technical, nonsubstantive changes to these provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
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
6 operating on the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of
7 Interstate and Defense Highways or when using those portions of
8 federal-aid primary system highways that have been qualified by
9 the United States Secretary of Transportation for that use, or when
10 using routes appropriately identified by the Department of

1 Transportation or local authorities as provided in subdivision (c)
2 or (d), if all of the following conditions are met:

3 (1) The length of the semitrailer in exclusive combination with
4 a truck tractor does not exceed 48 feet. A semitrailer not more than
5 53 feet in length shall satisfy this requirement when configured
6 with two or more rear axles, the rearmost of which is located 40
7 feet or less from the kingpin or when configured with a single axle
8 which is located 38 feet or less from the kingpin. For purposes of
9 this paragraph, a motortruck used in combination with a semitrailer,
10 when that combination of vehicles is engaged solely in the
11 transportation of motor vehicles, camper units, or boats, is
12 considered to be a truck tractor.

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

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

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

27 (d) The Department of Transportation or local authorities may
28 establish a process whereby access to terminals or services may
29 be applied for upon a route not previously established as an access
30 route. The denial of a request for access to terminals and services
31 shall be only on the basis of safety and an engineering analysis of
32 the proposed access route. If a written request for access has been
33 properly submitted and has not been acted upon within 90 days of
34 receipt by the department or the appropriate local agency, the
35 access shall be deemed automatically approved. Thereafter, the
36 route shall be deemed open for access by all other vehicles of the
37 same type regardless of ownership. In lieu of processing an access
38 application, the Department of Transportation or local authorities
39 with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions may
40 provide signing, mapping, or a listing of highways as necessary

1 to indicate the use of specific routes as terminal access routes. For
2 purposes of this subdivision, “terminal” means either of the
3 following:

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

6 (2) A facility where a motor carrier maintains operating
7 facilities.

8 (e) Nothing in subdivision (c) or (d) authorizes state or local
9 agencies to require permits of terminal operators or to charge
10 terminal operators fees for the purpose of attaining access for
11 vehicles described in this section.

12 (f) Notwithstanding subdivision (d), the limitations of access
13 specified in that subdivision do not apply to licensed carriers of
14 household goods when directly en route to or from a point of
15 loading or unloading of household goods, if travel on highways
16 other than those specified in subdivision (a) is necessary and
17 incidental to the shipment of the household goods.

18 (g) (1) Notwithstanding Sections 35400 and 35401, a
19 combination of vehicles consisting solely of a truck tractor
20 semitrailer combination with a kingpin to rearmost axle
21 measurement limit of not more than 46 feet, a trailer length of not
22 more than 56 feet, and used exclusively or primarily in connection
23 with motorsports, may operate on the routes identified in
24 subdivision (a) as well as on any other routes authorized for that
25 purpose by the Department of Transportation in consultation with
26 the Department of the California Highway Patrol, *when issued a*
27 *permit as set forth in paragraph (3)*. As used in this subdivision,
28 “motorsports” means an event, and all activities leading up to that
29 event, including, but not limited to, administration, testing, practice,
30 promotion, and merchandising, that is sanctioned under the
31 auspices of the member organizations of the Automobile
32 Competition Committee for the United States.

33 (2) (A) The Department of Transportation shall conduct field
34 tests of the truck tractor semitrailer combination authorized under
35 paragraph (1) for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet
36 to evaluate their performance on all segments of the National
37 Network and transition routes connecting to sanctioned motorsport
38 ~~racecourses, except for the Pomona Raceway and the Sonoma~~
39 ~~Raceway~~ *racecourses*.

1 ~~(B) On or before January 1, 2018, the Department of~~
2 ~~Transportation shall make the needed roadway improvements~~
3 ~~identified in the field tests and for the Pomona Raceway and the~~
4 ~~Sonoma Raceway, to accommodate the truck tractor semitrailer~~
5 ~~combination authorized under paragraph (1).~~

6 ~~(C)~~

7 (B) (i) The Legislature finds and declares that the Department
8 of Transportation established the existing transition routes
9 described in subparagraph (A) based on records from the 1990s.

10 (ii) The Department of Transportation shall update the transition
11 routes to reflect road projects completed since the 1990s and shall
12 update the transition routes every five years thereafter.

13 (iii) The Department of Transportation shall develop new
14 transition routes for the truck tractor semitrailer combination
15 authorized under paragraph (1) for motorsport trucks with a trailer
16 length of 56 feet.

17 ~~(D)~~

18 (C) The Department of Transportation shall, no later than
19 January 1, 2017, submit a report to the Legislature, in compliance
20 with Section 9795 of the Government Code, that includes the
21 results of the field tests, an overview of the related roadway
22 improvements identified and made, and, in consultation with the
23 Department of the California Highway Patrol, a recommendation
24 as to whether the 56 foot trailer length should be reauthorized.

25 ~~(E)~~

26 (D) Notwithstanding Section 10231.5 of the Government Code,
27 the requirement for submitting a report under this paragraph is
28 inoperative on January 1, 2019.

29 ~~(3) The authority conferred by this subdivision remains operative~~
30 ~~only until January 1, 2018.~~

31 (3) (A) *Permits for a combination of vehicles consisting solely*
32 *of a truck tractor semitrailer combination with a kingpin to*
33 *rearmost axle measurement limit of not more than 46 feet, a trailer*
34 *length of not more than 56 feet, for use exclusively or primarily*
35 *in connection with motorsports, to operate on the routes identified*
36 *in subdivision (a) as well as on any other routes authorized for*
37 *that purpose, as provided in paragraph (1), shall be issued by the*
38 *Department of Transportation, pursuant to Article 6 (commencing*
39 *with Section 35780) of Chapter 5. Permits shall be required to be*
40 *issued for travel on a specific route until either field tests by the*

1 *Department of Transportation determine that no additional projects*
2 *need to be performed on that route, or, if projects are required to*
3 *be performed on the route, until those projects are completed.*

4 *(B) Upon a determination based on field tests that no projects*
5 *need to be performed on a specific route, or upon completion of*
6 *projects for that route, permits for the operation of vehicles as*
7 *described in subparagraph (A) shall no longer be required.*

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

9 (1) In authorizing the use of 53-foot semitrailers, it is the intent
10 of the Legislature to conform with Section 31111(b)(1)(C) of Title
11 49 of the United States Code by permitting the continued use of
12 semitrailers of the dimensions as those that were in actual and legal
13 use on December 1, 1982, and does not intend this action to be a
14 precedent for future increases in the parameters of any of those
15 vehicles that would adversely affect the turning maneuverability
16 of vehicle combinations.

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