

Transportation Legislation Review Committee

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Committee Charge

Pursuant to Section 43-2-145, C.R.S., the Transportation Legislation Review Committee (TLRC) is authorized to give guidance and direction to:

- the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) in the development of the state transportation system and to provide legislative oversight of that development;
- the Colorado Department of Revenue (DOR) in the licensing of drivers and registration and titling of motor vehicles; and
- any state agency or political subdivision of the state that regulates motor vehicles or traffic, including those that impose penalties for violating traffic statutes and rules.

The committee must meet at least once each year to propose and review transportation, traffic, and motor vehicle legislation. It is permitted to review any phase of operations of CDOT, a public highway authority, or a regional transportation authority, and may require these entities to prepare and adopt long-range plans and complete financial or performance audits. The committee may also conduct a post-operation review of any project completed by these entities to determine whether it was completed in the most cost-effective and efficient manner.

Committee Activities

During the 2022 interim, the TLRC toured the Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnels and held two meetings at the State Capitol. The following organizations provided presentations to the committee:

- All Points Transit;
- American Automobile Association (AAA);
- Bicycle Colorado;
- Boulder Transportation Connections;
- Boulder Chamber;
- Colorado Association of Transit Agencies;
- CDOT;
- Colorado Energy Office;
- Colorado Motor Carriers Association (CMCA);
- Denver Streets Partnership;
- Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV);
- E-470 public highway authority;
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car;
- Front Range Passenger Rail District;
- Jefferson Parkway highway authority;
- Northwest Parkway highway authority;
- Pueblo Transit;
- Regional Transportation District; and
- Toyota.

Registration of fleet vehicles. A representative from Enterprise Rent-A-Car provided information on issues licensing fleet rental cars related to the passage of Senate Bill 21-069, requiring the expiration of license plates when a vehicle transfers to a new owner. Because of the volume of new cars received by Enterprise, it takes longer to register new cars and for customers to use cars between states. Customers often travel one way to another state, making it difficult to attach new plates to replace temporary tags prior to the expiration of the initial registration. The representative requested that fleet owners be allowed to transfer license plates between fleet vehicles and use a third party platform to register vehicles and hold a stock of license plates for the vehicles. A representative from DMV indicated that they are open to talking about changes requested for fleet vehicles.

Minor driver education requirements. A representative from AAA provided a presentation on driver education requirements in Colorado, including the increasing danger of driving on roadways, statistics on increased road deaths, equity issues around road fatalities, and the economic impacts of vehicle crashes. The presentation also included information on the current status of driver education class requirements in Colorado and the deficiencies of those requirements, the differences in requirements in other states in comparison to Colorado, and reforms to driver education.

Commercial vehicles. A representative from CMCA discussed legislation for large trucks traveling in roundabouts and updating the fine structure for intrastate motor carriers. A law requiring motorists to yield to trucks in a roundabout may improve safety, since two lanes are needed for trucks to travel through a roundabout. The representative also indicated that fines related to intrastate motor carriers need to be updated, since fines were last updated in 2001; fines are not keeping up with federal requirements; and fines may not be motivating carriers to keep equipment in good order.

Committee Recommendations

As a result of committee discussion and deliberation, the Transportation Legislation Review Committee recommends the following five bills for consideration in the 2023 legislative session.

Bill A — Registration of Motor Vehicles in Fleets. The bill allows motor vehicle fleet operators owning a fleet of at least 25 Class B or C motor vehicles to transfer license plates in good condition from one fleet vehicle to another during a title or interest transfer. The Department of Revenue (DOR) must allow fleet operators to maintain an inventory of new number plates and to use a third-party provider to handle registration, lien, and titling, and its plate inventory, management, and distribution. DOR may promulgate rules related to requirements of participating fleet operators, as well as oversight and auditing requirements.

Bill B — Move Over or Slow Down Stationary Vehicle. Under current law, a driver must exhibit due care and caution by moving one lane over or, if moving over is not possible, reducing and maintaining a safe speed when approaching or passing a stationary authorized emergency vehicle, towing carrier, public utility service vehicle, or motor vehicle whose tires are being equipped with chains. The bill adds stationary motor vehicles giving a hazard signal to this list. Failure to exhibit due care and caution is considered careless driving, which can range from a class 2 traffic misdemeanor to a class 6 felony, depending on if the driver’s actions are the proximate cause of injury or death.

Bill C — Yield to Larger Vehicles in Roundabouts. The bill requires a driver to yield the right-of-way to the driver of a vehicle with a length of at least 40 feet or a width of at least 10 feet when driving through a roundabout. If two vehicles that are at least 40 feet in length or 10 feet in width approach a roundabout at the same time, the driver on the right must yield to the driver on the left. A person who violates these requirements commits a class A traffic infraction subject to a \$70 penalty and \$11 surcharge.

Bill D — Minor Driver’s Education Requirements. The bill requires anyone under the age of 21 to take a driver education course before the individual can get an instructional permit or driver license. The bill also requires anyone under the age of 18 applying for an instructional permit to complete a 30-hour driver education course and for anyone between the ages of 18 and 21 to complete a 30-hour driver education course or a 4-hour prequalification driver awareness program. The bill creates a tax credit for individuals who pay for a driver education course. Finally, the bill requires commercial driving instructors to get a criminal background check before providing behind-the-wheel instruction to a minor.

Bill E — Commercial Vehicles Enforcement of Safety Laws. The bill changes the amount of civil penalties that may be levied on commercial motor carriers for failure to comply with rules for the safe operation of commercial vehicles by tying the amount of civil penalties to the amount of federal civil penalties for intrastate commercial motor carriers. DOR is authorized to cancel or deny registration of a commercial motor carrier that fails to cooperate with the completion of a safety compliance review within 30 days.