
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Section 249-7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:
3 "(b) Upon an original registration the director of finance
4 shall fix, and shall charge to the owner, a fee equal to the cost
5 of the number plate and tag or emblem plus the administrative
6 cost of furnishing the plate and tag or emblem and effecting the
7 registration. Upon the issuance of a new series of number plates
8 as determined by the directors of finance of each county through
9 majority consent, the director of finance shall charge the owner
10 a fee equal to the costs of the number plate plus the
11 administrative cost of furnishing the plates. Upon issuing a tag
12 or emblem, the director of finance shall charge the owner a fee
13 of 50 cents. The owner shall securely fasten the number plates
14 on the vehicle, one on the front and the other on the rear, at a
15 location provided by the manufacturer or in the absence of such a
16 location upon the bumpers of the vehicle and in conformance with
17 section 291-31, in such a manner as to prevent the plates from
18 swinging [~~and at a minimum of twelve inches from the ground~~].

1 Number plates shall at all times be displayed entirely unobscured
2 and be kept reasonably clean. In the case of trailers,
3 semitrailers, or motorcycles, one plate shall be used and it
4 shall be fastened to the rear thereof at a location provided by
5 the manufacturer or in the absence of such a location at the rear
6 thereof, and in the case of motorcycles in conformance with
7 section 291-31."

8 SECTION 2. Section 291-25, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
9 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

10 "(a) From thirty minutes after sunset until thirty minutes
11 before sunrise, every motor vehicle moving upon any public
12 highway shall carry at the front thereof at least two lighted
13 head lamps which shall display white lights of equal candle
14 power. The head lamps shall be securely mounted, not less than
15 [~~twenty-four~~] twenty-two inches nor more than fifty-four inches
16 above the road surface when measured to the head lamp center, on
17 a rigid part of the vehicle designed specifically for head lamp
18 installation by the manufacturer, and so arranged, adjusted, and
19 constructed that, when the motor vehicle is fully loaded, any
20 pair of headlights under the conditions of use shall produce a
21 light sufficient to reveal any person, vehicle, or substantial

1 object on the highway straight ahead of the motor vehicle for a
2 distance of two hundred feet.

3 The light when measured at a distance of one hundred feet
4 directly in front of the motor vehicle, and at a height of sixty
5 inches above the level surface on which the motor vehicle stands,
6 shall not exceed two thousand four hundred apparent candle power,
7 nor shall this candle power be exceeded at a greater height than
8 sixty inches.

9 When measured at a distance of one hundred feet ahead of the
10 motor vehicle and seven feet or more to the left of the axis of
11 the same, and at a height of sixty inches above the level surface
12 on which the motor vehicle stands, the light shall not exceed
13 eight hundred apparent candle power."

14 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
15 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

16 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

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INTRODUCED BY: Calvin K. Day
BY REQUEST

H.B. 1427

JUSTIFICATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Transportation

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLES.

PURPOSE: To change the minimum headlamp height requirement from 24 inches to 22 inches and to delete the requirement that a license plate be attached no lower than 12 inches above the ground.

MEANS: Amend sections 249-7(b) and 291-25(a), Hawaii Revised Statute.

JUSTIFICATION: Section 291-25, HRS, currently requires headlights to be no less than twenty-four inches or more than fifty-four inches above the road surface when measured to the headlamp center. This proposal will lower the limit to 22 inches. Some new vehicles are manufactured with headlamps that are less than 24 inches but not less than 22 inches.

Section 249-7, HRS: There is no reason for the 12-inch requirement. The primary concern is that the license plates are easy to see.

Motorcyclists who modify their motorcycles have a particularly difficult time with this section. If the rear fender is modified and the taillights mounted on the frame instead of the back of the fender, it is impossible for many motorcycles to accommodate a plate location that is at least 12 inches above the ground.

Automobiles may have a similar problem. Some cars come from the factory with a license plate holder location that causes the plate to be less than 12 inches from the ground, most notably models of sports cars.

Impact on the public: This will have a positive impact by complying with existing automobile manufacturing specifications and

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modifications made by private owners.

Impact on the department and other agencies:
None.

GENERAL FUND: None.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM
DESIGNATION: TRN 597.

OTHER AFFECTED
AGENCIES: County police departments for enforcement,
the Judiciary for adjudication, and
inspection stations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval.