



General Assembly

February Session, 2024

Substitute Bill No. 5327



**AN ACT REVISING MOTOR VEHICLE STATUTES CONCERNING
TOWING OCCUPIED VEHICLES AND THE OPERATION AND
INSPECTION OF SCHOOL BUSES.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 14-66 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
3 *1, 2024*):

4 (b) The commissioner, or an inspector authorized by the
5 commissioner, shall examine each wrecker, including its number,
6 equipment and identification, and shall determine the mechanical
7 condition of such wrecker and whether or not it is properly equipped to
8 do the work intended. A wrecker shall be deemed properly equipped if
9 there are flashing yellow lights installed and mounted on such wrecker
10 that (1) show in all directions at all times, and (2) are as close to the back
11 of the cab of such wrecker as practicable. Such lights shall be in
12 operation when such wrecker is towing a vehicle and when such
13 wrecker is at the scene of an accident or the location of a disabled motor
14 vehicle. In addition, each wrecker shall be equipped with a spot light
15 mounted so that its beam of light is directed toward the hoisting
16 equipment in the rear of such wrecker. The hoisting equipment of each
17 wrecker shall be of sufficient capacity to perform the service intended
18 and shall be securely mounted to the frame of such vehicle. A fire
19 extinguisher shall be carried at all times on each wrecker which shall be

20 in proper working condition, mounted in a permanent bracket on each
21 wrecker and have a minimum rating of eight bc. A set of three flares in
22 operating condition shall be carried at all times on each wrecker and
23 shall be used between the periods of one-half hour after sunset and one-
24 half hour before sunrise when the wrecker is parked on a highway while
25 making emergency repairs or preparing to pick up a disabled vehicle to
26 remove it from a highway or adjoining property. No registrant or
27 operator of any wrecker shall offer to give any gratuities or inducements
28 of any kind to any police officer or other person in order to obtain
29 towing business or recommendations for towing or storage of, or
30 estimating repairs to, disabled vehicles. No licensee shall require the
31 owner to sign a contract for the repair or storage of such owner's
32 damaged vehicle as part of the towing consideration or to sign an order
33 for the repair of, or authorization for estimating repairs to such vehicle,
34 until the tow job has been completed. No licensee shall tow a vehicle in
35 such a negligent manner as to cause further damage to the vehicle being
36 towed. No licensee shall knowingly permit any person to occupy a
37 vehicle while the vehicle is being towed. Nothing in this subsection shall
38 be construed to prohibit the licensee and owner of the damaged vehicle
39 from entering into an agreement for the repair or storage of such vehicle
40 upon the completion of the tow job.

41 *Sec. 2. (Effective from passage)* (a) Not later than September 1, 2024, the
42 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall review, and amend or revise as
43 necessary, any regulation, internal procedure or policy and any other
44 guidance provided to the owners or operators of school buses regarding
45 the operation and inspection of school buses to ensure such regulations,
46 procedures or policies and guidance (1) promote adherence to
47 subsection (b) of section 14-277 of the general statutes and the
48 regulations adopted under section 22a-174 of the general statutes, and
49 (2) do not explicitly or implicitly require a school bus to idle in excess of
50 three minutes during the performance of a daily vehicle inspection.

51 (b) Not later than September 1, 2024, the commissioner shall provide
52 guidance to the owners or operators of school buses that identifies the
53 portions of a daily vehicle inspection that could be performed while the

54 school bus is in accessory mode or while the engine is turned off and
55 post such guidance on the Internet web site of the Department of Motor
56 Vehicles.

57 Sec. 3. Subsection (f) of section 13a-26 of the 2024 supplement to the
58 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
59 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2024*):

60 (f) The provisions of this part restricting the use and accommodation
61 of motor vehicle traffic on parkways to noncommercial vehicles shall
62 not apply to use of the Merritt and Wilbur Cross Parkways by (1)
63 taxicabs, as defined in section 13b-95, (2) vanpool vehicles, as defined in
64 section 14-1, (3) service buses, service buses for students with special
65 needs, or two-axle, four-wheeled type II, registered school buses with a
66 gross vehicle weight rating of ten thousand pounds or less, which are
67 owned by or under contract to a public, private or religious school or
68 public school district and which are engaged in the transportation of
69 school children to and from school or school activities, provided (A)
70 such service buses conform to the regulations establishing the
71 maximum weight, length, height or width of vehicles permitted to use
72 such parkways; (B) such school buses are not more than ninety-eight
73 inches high, eighty-four inches wide and two hundred three inches
74 long; and (C) such service buses for students with special needs are not
75 more than one hundred twenty inches high, ninety inches wide and two
76 hundred eighty-eight inches long, (4) vehicles with a gross vehicle
77 weight rating of seven thousand five hundred pounds or less, even if
78 such vehicles contain any branding, advertising or logos thereon, or (5)
79 commercial motor vehicles used by an automobile club or association,
80 licensed in accordance with the provisions of section 14-67, solely for the
81 purpose of providing roadside assistance to vehicles located on the
82 parkway, provided such commercial motor vehicles [confirm] conform
83 to the regulations establishing the maximum length, height or width of
84 vehicles permitted to use such parkways. The Office of the State Traffic
85 Administration shall adopt regulations, in accordance with chapter 54,
86 establishing the maximum allowable length and height for any vanpool
87 vehicle using said Merritt and Wilbur Cross Parkways and reducing the

88 maximum weight, length, height or width of, or limiting the registration
89 classes of, motor vehicles permitted to use such parkways, in order to
90 fully carry out the prohibition on the operation of commercial motor
91 vehicles on such parkways.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2024</i>	14-66(b)
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2024</i>	13a-26(f)

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*