

SENATE BILL 2060

By Haile

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 55,
Chapter 12 and Title 55, Chapter 4, relative to
proof of financial responsibility.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 55, Chapter 4, Part 1, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

55-4-136.

(a) The general assembly hereby finds that the Financial Responsibility Law of 1977, compiled in title 55, chapter 12 is of utmost importance to the safety of the citizens of Tennessee.

(b) No person shall register or renew the registration of a motor vehicle, unless the application for registration or renewal is accompanied by evidence that the vehicle and its owner have met the requirements of this section and title 55, chapter 12 for the registration or renewal period. Every registration or renewal of registration shall be accompanied by the following notice:

THE OWNER AND/OR OPERATOR OF THIS VEHICLE ARE REQUIRED TO
MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE TENNESSEE FINANCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY LAW PURSUANT TO TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED §
55-4-136.

(c) Submission of either of the following items constitutes satisfactory proof that a vehicle and its owner have met the requirements of title 55, chapter 12, as required by subsection (b):

(1) A certificate valid for one (1) year, on forms provided by the commissioner, issued by an insurance company authorized to do business in this state stating that a policy of insurance meeting or exceeding the requirements of title 55, chapter 12 has been issued for the motor vehicle and will be in force throughout the period of registration or renewal; or

(2) A certificate valid for one (1) year issued by the commissioner of safety stating that a cash deposit or bond equal to or exceeding the amount required by title 55, chapter 12 has been paid or filed with the commissioner's office for the period of registration or renewal.

(d) If a cash deposit or bond used as a basis for a certificate submitted pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) is withdrawn prior to its scheduled expiration, then the commissioner of revenue shall immediately notify the registrant that the vehicle no longer meets the requirements of title 55, chapter 12 and that the vehicle's registration shall automatically terminate unless such requirements are met within fifteen (15) calendar days.

(e) There shall be a fifty dollar (\$50.00) registration reinstatement fee for the first termination of a vehicle's registration. The owner shall be required to provide satisfactory proof that the vehicle to be registered satisfies title 55, chapter 12. For each subsequent termination of a vehicle's registration, the fee shall be two hundred dollars (\$200). Any subsequent termination of a vehicle's registration shall also result in a six-month suspension of registration prior to reinstatement of the vehicle's registration upon presentation by the owner of satisfactory proof of financial responsibility.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-12-139(b)(1), is amended by deleting the language "has been issued;" and by substituting instead the following:

has been issued and will be in force throughout the period of registration or renewal of the motor vehicle;

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-12-139, is further amended by deleting subsections (c) through (e), inclusive, and by substituting instead the following:

(c) Any person who operates a motor vehicle in noncompliance with the financial responsibility requirements of this chapter or § 55-4-136, or who fails or refuses to comply with a request by a law enforcement officer or display documentation of such compliance, commits a Class C misdemeanor punishable by a fine not in excess of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for the first offense and, for each subsequent offense, by a fine not in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500) or loss of driver's license for a period not exceeding six (6) months, or both fine and suspension.

(d) A person commits a Class C felony who, with fraudulent intent:

(1) Alters, forges or counterfeits an insurance card to make it appear valid; or

(2) Makes, sells or otherwise makes available an invalid or counterfeit insurance card, or other evidence of insurance.

(e) Sanctions imposed pursuant to subsection (c) shall be in addition to any other fines imposed by this title for any other violation under such title.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2011, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply to acts committed on or after such date.