



H.B. 627

126th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Rep. Carmichael

BILL SUMMARY

- Permits a unit of farm machinery that is designed by its manufacturer to operate at a speed greater than 25 miles per hour ("fast farm machinery") to travel on a public street or road faster than 25 m.p.h. so long as the unit displays both a slow moving vehicle emblem and a special speed identification symbol.
- Requires the operator of a unit of fast farm machinery who wishes to travel on a public street or road faster than 25 m.p.h. to have a valid driver's or commercial driver's license.
- Provides that when two or more units of farm machinery are operated in combination on a street or highway, the speed at which the units are operated cannot exceed the speed that is the lowest of the maximum speeds at which the units of farm machinery comprising the combination are designed by their manufacturers to operate.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Overview

Under current law, farm machinery is exempt from the definition of "motor vehicle." Thus, units of farm machinery such as tractors are not required to have all the equipment that a passenger car is required to have, such as turn signals. Farm machinery cannot be operated on public streets or roads faster than 25 miles per hour and must display an approved triangular, orange slow-moving vehicle (SMV) emblem when being operated there. A person is not required to possess a driver's license to operate farm machinery on a public street or road; normally this occurs when the farm machinery is moved from one field to another.

The bill permits any unit of farm machinery that is designed by its manufacturer to operate at a speed greater than 25 m.p.h. ("fast farm machinery") to travel on a public street or road faster than 25 m.p.h. so long as the unit displays both an SMV emblem and a special speed identification symbol. In addition, the operator of a unit of fast farm machinery who wishes to travel on a public street or road faster than 25 m.p.h. must have a valid driver's or commercial driver's license. Finally, the bill makes changes in relevant definitions.

Signs and lights on fast farm machinery

Under current law, when a unit of farm machinery is operated on a street or highway, it must display an SMV emblem and cannot travel faster than 25 m.p.h. (R.C. 4513.11(B).) The bill prohibits any person from selling, leasing, renting, or operating on a street or highway any unit of fast farm machinery unless it displays an SMV emblem and a speed identification symbol (SIS) that meets the specifications contained in the American Society of Agricultural Engineers Standard ANSI/ASAE S584 JAN2005, agricultural equipment: speed identification symbol (SIS). The SIS indicates the maximum speed in miles per hour at which the unit of fast farm machinery is designed by its manufacturer to travel. (R.C. 4513.11(D)(2).)

Current law permits slow-moving vehicles, including farm machinery, to be equipped with not only an SMV emblem but also with a red flashing light that is visible from a distance of not less than 1,000 feet to the rear at all times of reduced visibility and at night (R.C. 4513.11(E)). The bill permits a unit of fast farm machinery to display such a red flashing light in addition to the SMV emblem and the SIS.

Under the bill, every unit of fast farm machinery must display both an SMV emblem and an approved SIS when being operated upon a street or highway, irrespective of the speed at which the unit is actually traveling. The SIS must indicate the maximum speed at which the unit of farm machinery is designed by its manufacturer to operate and the display of the SIS must be in accordance with the ANSI/ASAE standard. A unit of farm machinery that is designed by its manufacturer to be operated at a speed *not* exceeding 25 m.p.h. and a unit of farm machinery for which the manufacturer did not assign a maximum travel speed at the time of manufacture must display an SMV emblem and is specifically prohibited from displaying an SIS. (R.C. 4513.11(G).)

When two or more units of farm machinery are operated in combination on a street or highway, the speed at which the units are operated cannot exceed the speed that is the lowest of the maximum speeds at which the units of farm machinery comprising the combination are designed by their manufacturers to operate. For example, in the case of a farm tractor and a farm implement, if the

farm tractor was designed to travel at a maximum speed of 35 m.p.h. and the farm implement it is towing was designed to travel at a maximum speed of 25 m.p.h., the two units together cannot travel on a street or highway faster than 25 m.p.h. If the manufacturer of a unit of farm machinery did not assign at the time of manufacture a maximum travel speed for that unit, the maximum speed is deemed to be 25 m.p.h. (R.C. 4513.11(G).)

Driver's license requirement to drive a fast tractor on a street or highway

Under current law, a person is not required to obtain a driver's or commercial driver's license to drive or operate any farm tractor or implement of husbandry (farm machinery) or draw, move, or propel it upon a highway (R.C. 4507.03). The bill provides instead that no person is required to obtain a driver's or commercial driver's license for the purpose of temporarily driving, operating, drawing, moving, or propelling any agricultural tractor or implement of husbandry upon a street or highway at a speed of 25 m.p.h. or less (R.C. 4507.03(A)(2)).

The bill then prohibits any person from driving, operating, drawing, moving, or propelling any agricultural tractor or implement of husbandry upon a street or highway at a speed greater than 25 m.p.h. unless the person has a current, valid driver's or commercial driver's license (R.C. 4507.03(A)(3)). Violation of this prohibition is a first-degree misdemeanor (R.C. 4507.03(C)).¹

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	07-05-06

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¹ Punishable by a jail term of not more than six months, a fine of not more than \$1,000, or both.