

By: Representative Simmons

To: Transportation

HOUSE BILL NO. 1210

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 63-7-19, 63-7-20 AND 63-7-65,
2 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CLARIFY THE USE OF SIRENS AND
3 EMERGENCY LIGHTS BY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

5 SECTION 1. Section 63-7-19, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
6 amended as follows:

7 63-7-19. (1) Except as otherwise provided for unmarked
8 vehicles under Section 19-25-15 and Section 25-1-87, every police
9 vehicle shall be marked with blue lights. Every ambulance shall
10 be marked with red lights front and back. Every emergency
11 management/civil defense vehicle, including emergency response
12 vehicles of the Department of Environmental Quality, shall be
13 marked with blinking, rotating or oscillating red lights. Every
14 wrecker or other vehicle used for emergency work, except vehicles
15 authorized to use blue or red lights, shall be marked with
16 blinking, oscillating or rotating amber colored lights to warn
17 other vehicles to yield the right-of-way, as provided in Section
18 63-3-809. Only police vehicles used for emergency work may be
19 marked with blinking, oscillating or rotating blue lights to warn
20 other vehicles to yield the right-of-way. Only law enforcement
21 vehicles, fire vehicles, private or department-owned vehicles used
22 by firemen of volunteer fire departments which receive funds
23 pursuant to Section 83-1-39 when responding to calls, emergency
24 management/civil defense vehicles, emergency response vehicles of
25 the Department of Environmental Quality and ambulances used for
26 emergency work may be marked with blinking, oscillating or

27 rotating red lights and sirens as provided in Section 63-7-65 to
28 warn other vehicles to yield the right-of-way. This section shall
29 not apply to school buses carrying lighting devices in accordance
30 with Section 63-7-23.

31 (2) Any vehicle referred to in subsection (1) of this
32 section also shall be authorized to use alternating flashing
33 headlights when responding to any emergency.

34 (3) Any vehicle operated by a United States rural mail
35 carrier for the purpose of delivering United States mail may be
36 marked with two (2) amber colored lights on front top of the
37 vehicle and two (2) red colored lights on rear top of the vehicle
38 so as to warn approaching travelers to decrease their speed
39 because of danger of colliding with the mail carrier as he stops
40 and starts along the edge of the road, street or highway.

41 SECTION 2. Section 63-7-20, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
42 amended as follows:

43 63-7-20. (1) It is unlawful for any person, other than a
44 law enforcement officer on duty, to use or display blue lights on
45 a motor vehicle as provided for in Section 63-7-19.

46 (2) It is unlawful for any person to use or display red
47 lights on a motor vehicle except as provided for in Section
48 63-7-19. It is not unlawful for the red lights or sirens
49 authorized for private or department-owned vehicles used by
50 firemen of volunteer fire departments, as provided in Section
51 63-7-19, to remain mounted on such vehicles when the lights are
52 not in use.

53 (3) It is unlawful for any vehicle to use alternating
54 flashing headlights except an emergency vehicle as provided in
55 Section 63-7-19.

56 (4) A person violating this section is guilty of a
57 misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be punished by a fine of
58 not less than Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) nor more than Five Hundred
59 Dollars (\$500.00).

60 SECTION 3. Section 63-7-65, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
61 amended as follows:

62 63-7-65. (1) Every motor vehicle when operated upon a
63 highway shall be equipped with a horn in good working order and

64 capable of emitting sound audible under normal conditions from a
65 distance of not less than two hundred (200) feet. The driver of a
66 motor vehicle shall, when reasonably necessary to insure safe
67 operation, give audible warning with his horn but shall not
68 otherwise use such horn upon a highway. No horn or other warning
69 device shall emit an unreasonably loud or harsh sound or a
70 whistle.

71 (2) Any authorized emergency vehicle may be equipped with a
72 siren, whistle, or bell, capable of emitting sound audible under
73 normal conditions from a distance of not less than five hundred
74 (500) feet and of a type approved by the department. Private or
75 department-owned vehicles used by firemen or volunteer firemen of
76 volunteer fire departments which receive funds pursuant to Section
77 83-1-39 may be equipped with a siren which may be used only when
78 responding to a fire. No such siren shall be used except when
79 such vehicle is operated in response to an emergency call or in
80 the immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the
81 law, in which said latter events the driver of such vehicle shall
82 sound such siren when necessary to warn pedestrians and other
83 drivers of the approach thereof.

84 (3) No vehicle shall be equipped with nor shall any person
85 use upon a vehicle any siren, whistle, or bell, except as
86 otherwise permitted in this section. No bicycle shall be equipped
87 with nor shall any person use upon a bicycle any siren or whistle.

88 (4) Any vehicle may be equipped with a theft alarm signal
89 device which is so arranged that it cannot be used by the driver
90 as an ordinary warning signal.

91 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from
92 and after July 1, 1999.