HOUSE BILL NO. 831

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 63-7-19 AND 63-7-23, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO AUTHORIZE VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTERS TO USE FLASHING OR STROBE EMERGENCY LIGHTS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

63-7-19. (1) Except as otherwise provided for unmarked vehicles under Section 19-25-15 and Section 25-1-87, every police vehicle shall be marked with blue lights. Every ambulance shall be marked with red lights front and back. Every emergency management/civil defense vehicle, including emergency response vehicles of the Department of Environmental Quality, shall be marked with blinking, rotating or oscillating red lights. Every wrecker or other vehicle used for emergency work, except vehicles authorized to use blue or red lights, shall be marked with blinking, oscillating or rotating amber colored lights to warn other vehicles to yield the right-of-way, as provided in Section 63-3-809. Only police vehicles used for emergency work may be marked with blinking, oscillating or rotating blue lights to warn other vehicles to yield the right-of-way. Only law enforcement vehicles, fire vehicles, private or department-owned vehicles used by firemen of volunteer fire departments which receive funds pursuant to Section 83-1-39 when responding to calls, emergency management/civil defense vehicles, emergency response vehicles of the Department of Environmental Quality and ambulances used for emergency work may be marked with blinking, oscillating or rotating red lights to warn other vehicles to yield the right-of-way.
right-of-way. This section shall not apply to school buses carrying lighting devices in accordance with Section 63-7-23.

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

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

SECTION 2. Section 63-7-23, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

63-7-23. (1) The color of lighting devices shall be as follows:

(a) All front clearance lamps, and all side marker lamps, except the one on each side at or near the rear of any bus, truck, truck tractor, semitrailer, full trailer or pole trailer, shall when lighted display an amber color.

(b) No red lighting device of any character shall be mounted at any place other than on or near the rear of any bus, truck, truck tractor, semitrailer, full trailer or pole trailer. However, school buses owned by or under contract with a school district of this state may have affixed at or near the front end thereof red lighting devices that may be caused to blink when the school bus is stopped or in the process of stopping for the purpose of loading or unloading school children. A school bus also may be equipped with a white, flashing strobe light on the roof of the vehicle installed according to standards promulgated by the Mississippi Department of Education as authorized under Section 37-41-1(c). Volunteer fire fighters may use flashing or
strobe lights in vehicles used to respond to fires and other
emergencies to which volunteer fire fighters respond.

(c) All rear clearance lamps, the side marker lamps on
each side at or near the rear, and any other lamps mounted on the
rear, on any bus, truck, truck tractor, semitrailer, full trailer
or pole trailer shall when lighted display a red color. However,
the stoplight or other warning device on the rear of any motor
vehicle may be red or amber.

(d) Backing lights of any color may be mounted on the
rear of any motor vehicle if the switch controlling such lights be
so arranged that they may be turned on only when the vehicle is in
reverse gear. Such backing lights when unlighted shall be so
colored or otherwise arranged as not to reflect objectionable
glare in the eyes of drivers of vehicles approaching from the
rear.

(2) Auxiliary white lights mounted on or near the rear of a
motor vehicle, or visible from the rear of the vehicle, shall not
be prohibited under the provisions of this section if (a) the
vehicle’s gross weight is less than twelve thousand one (12,001)
pounds, and (b) the lights are designed by the motor vehicle
manufacturer or an after-market parts manufacturer so that they
may only be illuminated whenever the vehicle is not in motion and
the transmission of the vehicle is not capable of transmitting
power to the wheels.

(3) No provision of this section shall be so construed as to
prevent the use of any white light or lights for the purpose of
illuminating license plates.

(4) Any lamps illuminated when the vehicle is in motion,
other than those expressly required or permitted by the provisions
of this chapter, shall, if visible from the front, display a white
or amber light; if visible from either side, display an amber
light; and if visible from the rear, display a red light.
SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2002.