

By: Representative Formby

To: Judiciary B

HOUSE BILL NO. 497

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 63-3-603, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
 2 TO PROVIDE ENHANCED PENALTIES FOR A MOTORIST WHO IN THE COURSE OF
 3 VIOLATING THE REQUIREMENT THAT VEHICLES TRAVELING ON A MULTI-LANE
 4 ROADWAY USE THE RIGHT, OUTSIDE LANE BLOCKS OR PREVENTS AN
 5 EMERGENCY VEHICLE FROM PASSING OR OVERTAKING SUCH MOTORIST IN THE
 6 LEFT, INSIDE LANE WHEN THE EMERGENCY VEHICLE IS SOUNDING ITS HORN,
 7 BELL, WHISTLE OR SIREN OR DISPLAYING EMERGENCY LIGHTS; AND FOR
 8 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 **SECTION 1.** Section 63-3-603, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
 11 amended as follows:

12 63-3-603. (1) Whenever any roadway has been divided into
 13 three (3) or more clearly marked lanes for traffic, except through
 14 or bypassing a municipality, the following rules in addition to
 15 all others consistent herewith shall apply:

16 (a) A vehicle shall be driven as nearly as practical
 17 entirely within a single lane and shall not be moved from such
 18 lane until the driver has first ascertained that such movement can
 19 be made with safety.

20 (b) A vehicle shall not be driven in the center lane
 21 upon a roadway which is divided into three (3) lanes except when:

22 (i) Overtaking and passing another vehicle where
 23 the roadway is clearly visible and such center lane is clear of
 24 traffic within a safe distance;

25 (ii) Such vehicle is in preparation for a left
 26 turn; or

27 (iii) Such center lane is at the time allocated
 28 exclusively to traffic moving in the direction such vehicle is
 29 proceeding and is signposted to give notice of such allocation.

30 (c) Official signs may be erected directing slow-moving
31 traffic to use a designated lane or allocating specified lanes to
32 traffic moving in the same direction, and drivers of vehicles
33 shall obey the directions of every such sign.

34 (d) Upon all roadways any vehicle proceeding at less
35 than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under
36 the conditions then existing shall be driven in the right-hand
37 lane then available for traffic, or as close as practicable to the
38 right-hand curb or edge of the roadway, except when overtaking and
39 passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction or when
40 preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private
41 road or driveway.

42 (e) Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall not
43 ride more than two (2) abreast except on paths or parts of
44 roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles. Persons
45 riding two (2) abreast shall not impede the normal and reasonable
46 movement of traffic and, on a laned roadway, shall ride within a
47 single lane.

48 (2) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) of this
49 section, a violation of subsection (1) of this section shall be
50 punished, upon conviction, as provided in Section 63-9-11.

51 (3) Any person who, in the course of violating subsection
52 (1) of this section, blocks or prevents an emergency vehicle from
53 passing or overtaking such person in the left, inside lane of a
54 roadway designed with two (2) or more lanes designated for traffic
55 proceeding in the same direction, when such emergency vehicle is
56 sounding its horn, bell, whistle or siren or displaying emergency
57 lights, upon conviction, shall be punished by fine and/or
58 imprisonment of not more than twice the applicable fine and/or
59 imprisonment provided for in Section 63-9-11.

60 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
61 and after July 1, 2005.