

By: Senator(s) Mettetal

To: Highways and  
Transportation

SENATE BILL NO. 2303

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE OPERATION OF CERTAIN LOW-SPEED  
 2 FOUR-WHEELED ELECTRIC VEHICLES ON PUBLIC ROADS AND STREETS ON  
 3 WHICH THE POSTED SPEED LIMIT IS 35 MILES PER HOUR OR LESS; TO  
 4 PROVIDE THAT SUCH VEHICLES MAY BE OPERATED ON SUCH PUBLIC ROADS  
 5 AND STREETS ONLY BY THE HOLDER OF A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE; TO  
 6 AUTHORIZE COUNTIES, MUNICIPALITIES AND THE MISSISSIPPI  
 7 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION TO PROHIBIT THE OPERATION OF SUCH  
 8 VEHICLES UPON STREETS UNDER THEIR JURISDICTION IF SUCH PROHIBITION  
 9 IS IN THE INTEREST OF SAFETY; TO AMEND SECTION 27-19-3,  
 10 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT SUCH VEHICLES ARE  
 11 INCLUDED WITHIN THE DEFINITION OF THE TERM "MOTOR VEHICLE" UNDER  
 12 THE LAWS GOVERNING THE PRIVILEGE TAXATION AND LICENSING OF MOTOR  
 13 VEHICLES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

15 **SECTION 1.** (1) As used in this section, "low-speed vehicle"  
 16 means a four-wheeled electric vehicle that can attain a maximum  
 17 speed of at least twenty (20) miles per hour nor more than  
 18 twenty-five (25) miles per hour and complies with all of the  
 19 provisions of 49 CFR 571.500.

20 (2) A low-speed vehicle may be operated only on public  
 21 streets, roads or highways on which the posted speed limit is  
 22 thirty-five (35) miles per hour or less; however, a low-speed  
 23 vehicle may cross a public street, road or highway that has a  
 24 posted speed limit in excess of thirty-five (35) miles per hour.

25 (3) A low-speed vehicle may be operated on public streets,  
 26 roads or highways only by a person who is the holder of a valid  
 27 driver's license.

28 (4) The board of supervisors of any county or the governing  
 29 authorities of any municipality may prohibit the operation of a  
 30 low-speed vehicle on any street, road or highway under their  
 31 jurisdiction if they determine that such prohibition is in the  
 32 interest of safety.

33           (5) The Mississippi Transportation Commission may prohibit  
34 the operation of a low-speed vehicle on any public street, road or  
35 highway under its jurisdiction if the commission determines that  
36 such prohibition is in the interest of safety.

37           **SECTION 2.** Section 27-19-3, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
38 amended as follows:

39           27-19-3. (a) The following words and phrases when used in  
40 this article for the purpose of this article have the meanings  
41 respectively ascribed to them in this section, except in those  
42 instances where the context clearly describes and indicates a  
43 different meaning:

44           (1) "Vehicle" means every device in, upon or by which  
45 any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a  
46 public highway, except devices moved by muscular power or used  
47 exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks.

48           (2) "Commercial vehicle" means every vehicle used or  
49 operated upon the public roads, highways or bridges in connection  
50 with any business function.

51           (3) "Motor vehicle" means every vehicle as defined in  
52 this section which is self-propelled, including, but not limited  
53 to, trackless street or trolley cars and low-speed vehicles as  
54 defined in Section 1 of Senate Bill No. 2303, 2006 Regular  
55 Session. The term "motor vehicle" shall not include electric  
56 personal assistive mobility devices as defined in Section  
57 63-3-103.

58           (4) "Tractor" means every vehicle designed, constructed  
59 or used for drawing other vehicles.

60           (5) "Motorcycle" means every vehicle designed to travel  
61 on not more than three (3) wheels in contact with the ground,  
62 except vehicles included within the term "tractor" as herein  
63 classified and defined.

64           (6) "Truck tractor" means every motor vehicle designed  
65 and used for drawing other vehicles and so constructed as to carry

66 a load other than a part of the weight of the vehicle and load so  
67 drawn and has a gross vehicle weight (GVW) in excess of ten  
68 thousand (10,000) pounds.

69 (7) "Trailer" means every vehicle without motive power,  
70 designed to carry property or passengers wholly on its structure  
71 and which is drawn by a motor vehicle.

72 (8) "Semitrailer" means every vehicle (of the trailer  
73 type) so designed and used in conjunction with a truck tractor.

74 (9) "Foreign vehicle" means every motor vehicle,  
75 trailer or semitrailer, which shall be brought into the state  
76 otherwise than by or through a manufacturer or dealer for resale  
77 and which has not been registered in this state.

78 (10) "Pneumatic tires" means all tires inflated with  
79 compressed air.

80 (11) "Solid rubber tires" means every tire made of  
81 rubber other than pneumatic tires.

82 (12) "Solid tires" means all tires, the surface of  
83 which in contact with the highway is wholly or partly of metal or  
84 other hard, nonresilient material.

85 (13) "Person" means every natural person, firm,  
86 copartnership, corporation, joint-stock or other association or  
87 organization.

88 (14) "Owner" means a person who holds the legal title  
89 of a vehicle or in the event a vehicle is the subject of an  
90 agreement for the conditional sale, lease or transfer of the  
91 possession, the person with the right of purchase upon performance  
92 of conditions stated in the agreement, and with an immediate right  
93 of possession vested in the conditional vendee, lessee, possessor  
94 or in the event such or similar transaction is had by means of a  
95 mortgage, and the mortgagor of a vehicle is entitled to  
96 possession, then such conditional vendee, lessee, possessor or  
97 mortgagor shall be deemed the owner for the purposes of this  
98 article.

99                   (15) "School bus" means every motor vehicle engaged  
100 solely in transporting school children or school children and  
101 teachers to and from schools; however, such vehicles may transport  
102 passengers on weekends and legal holidays and during summer months  
103 between the terms of school for compensation when the  
104 transportation of passengers is over a route of which not more  
105 than fifty percent (50%) traverses the route of a common carrier  
106 of passengers by motor vehicle and when no passengers are picked  
107 up on the route of any such carrier.

108                   (16) "Dealer" means every person engaged regularly in  
109 the business of buying, selling or exchanging motor vehicles,  
110 trailers, semitrailers, trucks, tractors or other character of  
111 commercial or industrial motor vehicles in this state, and having  
112 an established place of business in this state.

113                   (17) "Highway" means and includes every way or place of  
114 whatever nature, including public roads, streets and alleys of  
115 this state generally open to the use of the public or to be opened  
116 or reopened to the use of the public for the purpose of vehicular  
117 travel, and notwithstanding that the same may be temporarily  
118 closed for the purpose of construction, reconstruction,  
119 maintenance or repair.

120                   (18) "State Tax Commission" means the Chairman of the  
121 State Tax Commission of this state, acting directly or through his  
122 duly authorized officers, agents, representatives and employees.

123                   (19) "Common carrier by motor vehicle" means any person  
124 who or which undertakes, whether directly or by a lease or any  
125 other arrangement, to transport passengers or property or any  
126 class or classes of property for the general public in interstate  
127 or intrastate commerce on the public highways of this state by  
128 motor vehicles for compensation, whether over regular or irregular  
129 routes. The term "common carrier by motor vehicle" shall not  
130 include passenger buses operating within the corporate limits of a  
131 municipality in this state or not exceeding five (5) miles beyond

132 the corporate limits of the municipality, and hearses, ambulances,  
133 school buses as such. In addition, this definition shall not  
134 include taxicabs.

135 (20) "Contract carrier by motor vehicle" means any  
136 person who or which under the special and individual contract or  
137 agreements, and whether directly or by a lease or any other  
138 arrangement, transports passengers or property in interstate or  
139 intrastate commerce on the public highways of this state by motor  
140 vehicle for compensation. The term "contract carrier by motor  
141 vehicle" shall not include passenger buses operating wholly within  
142 the corporate limits of a municipality in this state or not  
143 exceeding five (5) miles beyond the corporate limits of the  
144 municipality, and hearses, ambulances, school buses as such. In  
145 addition, this definition shall not include taxicabs.

146 (21) "Private commercial and noncommercial carrier of  
147 property by motor vehicle" means any person not included in the  
148 terms "common carrier by motor vehicle" or "contract carrier by  
149 motor vehicle," who or which transports in interstate or  
150 intrastate commerce on the public highways of this state by motor  
151 vehicle, property of which such person is the owner, lessee, or  
152 bailee, other than for hire. The term "private commercial and  
153 noncommercial carrier of private property by motor vehicle" shall  
154 not include passenger buses operated wholly within the corporate  
155 limits of a municipality of this state, or not exceeding five (5)  
156 miles beyond the corporate limits of the municipality, and  
157 hearses, ambulances, school buses as such. In addition, this  
158 definition shall not include taxicabs.

159 Haulers of fertilizer shall be classified as private  
160 commercial carriers of property by motor vehicle.

161 (22) "Private carrier of passengers" means all other  
162 passenger motor vehicle carriers not included in the above  
163 definitions. The term "private carrier of passengers" shall not  
164 include passenger buses operating wholly within the corporate

165 limits of a municipality in this state, or not exceeding five (5)  
166 miles beyond the corporate limits of the municipality, and  
167 hearses, ambulances, and school buses as such. In addition, this  
168 definition shall not include taxicabs.

169 (23) "Operator" means any person, partnership,  
170 joint-stock company or corporation operating on the public  
171 highways of the state one or more motor vehicles as the beneficial  
172 owner or lessee.

173 (24) "Driver" means the person actually driving or  
174 operating such motor vehicle at any given time.

175 (25) "Private carrier of property" means any person  
176 transporting property on the highways of this state as defined  
177 below:

178 (a) Any person transporting farm products produced  
179 on his own farm and also farm supplies, materials and equipment  
180 used in the growing or production of his agricultural products in  
181 his own truck.

182 (b) Any person transporting his own fish,  
183 including shellfish, in his own truck.

184 (c) Any person transporting unprocessed forest  
185 products, wherein ownership remains the same, in his own truck.

186 (26) "Taxicab" means any passenger motor vehicle for  
187 hire with a seating capacity not greater than ten (10) passengers.  
188 For purposes of this paragraph (26), seating capacity shall be  
189 determined according to the manufacturer's suggested seating  
190 capacity for a vehicle. If there is no manufacturer's suggested  
191 seating capacity for a vehicle, the seating capacity for the  
192 vehicle shall be determined according to regulations established  
193 by the State Tax Commission.

194 (27) "Passenger coach" means any passenger motor  
195 vehicle with a seating capacity greater than ten (10) passengers,  
196 operating wholly within the corporate limits of a municipality of  
197 this state or within five (5) miles of the corporate limits of the

198 municipality, or motor vehicles substituted for abandoned electric  
199 railway systems in or between municipalities. For purposes of  
200 this paragraph (27), seating capacity shall be determined  
201 according to the manufacturer's suggested seating capacity for a  
202 vehicle. If there is no manufacturer's suggested seating capacity  
203 for a vehicle, the seating capacity for the vehicle shall be  
204 determined according to regulations established by the State Tax  
205 Commission.

206 (28) "Empty weight" means the actual weight of a  
207 vehicle including fixtures and equipment necessary for the  
208 transportation of load hauled or to be hauled.

209 (29) "Gross weight" means the empty weight of the  
210 vehicle, as defined herein, plus any load being transported or to  
211 be transported.

212 (30) "Ambulance and hearse" shall have the meaning  
213 generally ascribed to them. A hearse or funeral coach shall be  
214 classified as a light carrier of property, as defined in Section  
215 27-51-101.

216 (31) "Regular seats" means each seat ordinarily and  
217 customarily used by one (1) passenger, including all temporary,  
218 emergency, and collapsible seats. Where any seats are not  
219 distinguished or separated by separate cushions and backs, a seat  
220 shall be counted for each eighteen (18) inches of space on such  
221 seats or major fraction thereof. In the case of a regular  
222 passenger-type automobile which is used as a common or contract  
223 carrier of passengers, three (3) seats shall be counted for the  
224 rear seat of such automobile and one (1) seat shall be counted for  
225 the front seat of such automobile.

226 (32) "Ton" means two thousand (2,000) pounds  
227 avoirdupois.

228 (33) "Bus" means any passenger vehicle with a seating  
229 capacity of more than ten (10) but shall not include "private  
230 carrier of passengers" and "school bus" as defined in paragraphs

231 (15) and (22) of this section. For purposes of this paragraph  
232 (33), seating capacity shall be determined according to the  
233 manufacturer's suggested seating capacity for a vehicle. If there  
234 is no manufacturer's suggested seating capacity for a vehicle, the  
235 seating capacity for the vehicle shall be determined according to  
236 regulations established by the State Tax Commission.

237 (34) "Corporate fleet" means a group of two hundred  
238 (200) or more marked private carriers of passengers or light  
239 carriers of property, as defined in Section 27-51-101, trailers,  
240 semitrailers, or motor vehicles in excess of ten thousand (10,000)  
241 pounds gross vehicle weight, except for those vehicles registered  
242 for interstate travel, owned or leased on a long-term basis by a  
243 corporation or other legal entity. In order to be considered  
244 marked, the motor vehicle must have a name, trademark or logo  
245 located either on the sides or the rear of the vehicle in sharp  
246 contrast to the background, and of a size, shape and color that is  
247 legible during daylight hours from a distance of fifty (50) feet.

248 (35) "Individual fleet" means a group of five (5) or  
249 more private carriers of passengers or light carriers of property,  
250 as defined in Section 27-51-101, owned or leased by the same  
251 person and principally garaged in the same county.

252 (b) (1) No lease shall be recognized under the provisions  
253 of this article unless it shall be in writing and shall fully  
254 define a bona fide relationship of lessor and lessee, signed by  
255 both parties, dated and be in the possession of the driver of the  
256 leased vehicle at all times.

257 (2) Leased vehicles shall be considered as domiciled at  
258 the place in the State of Mississippi from which they operate in  
259 interstate or intrastate commerce, and for the purposes of this  
260 article shall be considered as owned by the lessee, who shall  
261 furnish all insurance on the vehicles and the driver of the  
262 vehicles shall be considered as an agent of the lessee for all  
263 purposes of this article.



264           **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
265 and after July 1, 2006.