MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2018

By: Representative Busby
To: Transportation

HOUSE BILL NO. 1343
(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 63-3-103, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO DEFINE THE TERM "PLATOON" FOR THE PURPOSES OF CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS; TO AMEND SECTION 63-3-619, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO EXEMPT CERTAIN VEHICLE OPERATORS IN A PLATOON FROM PROVISIONS OF LAW REQUIRING CERTAIN DISTANCES TO BE MAINTAINED BETWEEN TRAVELING VEHICLES; TO REQUIRE PLANS FOR THE OPERATION OF A PLATOON TO BE FILED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION; TO PROVIDE THAT THE PLANS ARE ACCEPTED OR REJECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY WITHIN 30 DAYS OF FILING; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 63-3-103, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

63-3-103. (a) "Vehicle" means every device in, upon or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway, except devices used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks.

(b) "Motor vehicle" means every vehicle which is self-propelled and every vehicle which is propelled by electric power obtained from overhead trolley wires, but not operated upon rails. The term "motor vehicle" shall not include electric personal assistive mobility devices.
(c) "Motorcycle" means every motor vehicle having a saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three (3) wheels in contact with the ground but excluding a tractor. The term "motorcycle" includes motor scooters as defined in paragraph (j) of this subsection.

(d) "Authorized emergency vehicle" means every vehicle of the fire department (fire patrol), every police vehicle, every 911 Emergency Communications District vehicle, every such ambulance and special use EMS vehicle as defined in Section 41-59-3, every Mississippi Emergency Management Agency vehicle as is designated or authorized by the Executive Director of MEMA and every emergency vehicle of municipal departments or public service corporations as is designated or authorized by the commission or the chief of police of an incorporated city.

(e) "School bus" means every motor vehicle operated for the transportation of children to or from any school, provided same is plainly marked "School Bus" on the front and rear thereof and meets the requirements of the State Board of Education as authorized under Section 37-41-1.

(f) "Recreational vehicle" means a vehicular type unit primarily designed as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping or travel use, which either has its own motive power or is mounted on or drawn by another vehicle and includes travel trailers, fifth-wheel trailers, camping trailers, truck campers and motor homes.
(g) "Motor home" means a motor vehicle that is designed and constructed primarily to provide temporary living quarters for recreational, camping or travel use.

(h) "Electric assistive mobility device" means a self-balancing two-tandem wheeled device, designed to transport only one (1) person, with an electric propulsion system that limits the maximum speed of the device to fifteen (15) miles per hour.

(i) "Autocycle" means a motorcycle with three (3) wheels that is completely enclosed with a roll cage or roll bar, automotive controls and seat belts.

(j) "Motor scooter" means a two-wheeled vehicle that has a seat for the operator, one (1) wheel that is ten (10) inches or more in diameter, a step-through chassis, a motor with a rating of two and seven-tenths (2.7) brake horsepower or less if the motor is an internal combustion engine, an engine of 50cc or less and otherwise meets all safety requirements of motorcycles.

(k) "Platoon" means a group of individual motor vehicles traveling in a unified manner at electronically coordinated speeds at following distances that are closer than would be reasonable and prudent without such coordination.

SECTION 2. Section 63-3-619, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

63-3-619. (1) The driver of a motor vehicle shall not follow another vehicle more closely than is reasonable and
prudent, having due regard for the speed of such vehicles and the
traffic upon and the condition of the highway.

(2) The driver of any motor truck or motor truck drawing
another vehicle when traveling upon a roadway outside of a
business or residence district shall not follow within three
hundred (300) feet of another motor truck or motor truck drawing
another vehicle. The provisions of this subsection shall not be
construed to prevent overtaking and passing nor shall the same
apply upon any lane specially designated for use by motor trucks.

(3) (a) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (b) of this
subsection, subsections (1) and (2) of this section shall not
apply to the operator of a nonlead vehicle in a platoon, as
defined in Section 63-3-103(k), as long as the platoon is
operating on a limited access divided highway with more than one
(1) lane in each direction and the platoon consists of not more
than two (2) motor vehicles.

(b) A platoon may be operated in this state only after
an operator files a plan for approval of general platoon
operations with the Department of Transportation. If that
department approves the submission, it shall forward the plan to
the Department of Public Safety for approval. The plan shall be
reviewed and either approved or disapproved by the Department of
Transportation and the Department of Public Safety within thirty
(30) days after it is filed. If approved by both departments, the
operator shall be allowed to operate the platoon five (5) working
days after plan approval. The Motor Carrier Division of the
Department of Public Safety shall develop the acceptable standards
required for each portion of the plan.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from
and after January 1, 2019.