

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## An Act To Amend the Motor Vehicle Laws

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §1901**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and as affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

### § 1901. General restriction

A person may not use, sell or equip a vehicle with a lens, muffler, reflector, lighting device, window-tinting material or other for use on a public way with aftermarket equipment contrary to this Title or contrary to the rules of the Chief of the State Police.

**Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §1912, sub-§1**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and as affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

**1. Muffler required.** A person may not operate a motor vehicle unless that vehicle is equipped with an adequate muffler properly maintained to prevent excessive or unusual noise.

**Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §1912, sub-§3**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and as affected by Pt. B, §5, is repealed.

**Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §1912, sub-§6**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 314, §11, is further amended to read:

**6. Exception.** ~~Subsections 1 and 3 do not apply to a~~ A muffler or exhaust system that meets the requirements of this section if it does not emit noise in excess of 95 decibels as measured in accordance with standards and specifications outlined in standard J-1169 adopted by the Society of Automotive Engineers in May 1998. A person served with a Violation Summons and Complaint charging a violation of ~~subsection 1 or 3~~ this section must provide satisfactory evidence that the muffler or exhaust system does not emit a noise in excess of 95 decibels as measured in accordance with standards and specifications outlined in standard J-1169 adopted by the Society of Automotive Engineers in May 1998. Measurements must be made by participating certified inspection stations.

This subsection applies to motor vehicles as defined in section 101, subsection 42, except that it does not apply to motorcycles.

**Sec. 5. 29-A MRSA §1916, sub-§1, ¶C**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and as affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

C. A side window or rear window is composed of, covered by or treated with a material that ~~has~~ allows a net light transmittance of glass and material of less than 50%35%; or

**Sec. 6. 29-A MRSA §1916, sub-§2, ¶A**, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and as affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:

A. The provisions of subsection 1 do not apply to:

(1) A certificate or other paper required or allowed by law to be displayed, which must be removable for safety reasons when the vehicle is being driven on a public way;

(2) The label attached to a window showing the price, estimated mileage and other federally mandated information commonly known as the manufacturer's suggested retail price label, which must be removable for safety reasons when the vehicle is being driven on a public way;

(3) Sun-screening or window-tinting material along a ~~4-inch strip at the AS 1 line~~. For purposes of this paragraph, "AS 1 line" means a parallel line 5 inches from the top of the windshield; or

(4) Motor vehicles for which the Chief of the State Police has granted an exception because the health of the owner or a person who usually occupies the vehicle is adversely affected by sunlight. The Chief of the State Police may, upon proper application, provide the owner of a motor vehicle with a certificate of exemption that must be displayed upon the request of a law enforcement officer.

**Sec. 7. 29-A MRSA §1917, sub-§6,** as enacted by PL 2003, c. 146, §1, is amended to read:

**6. Wheels.** If the rim size has been altered, ~~the overall diameter of the wheel with the tire must be within the vehicle manufacturer's specifications~~ a properly sized tire must be used. Street rods, custom vehicles and trucks are exempt from this subsection.

**Sec. 8. 29-A MRSA §1920, sub-§3,** as amended by PL 2005, c. 276, §2, is further amended to read:

**3. Suspension.** Except as provided in this subsection or in subsection 2, an original suspension system may not be disconnected to defeat the safe operation of the suspension system. This section does not prohibit the installation of heavy duty equipment, including shock absorbers and overload springs, or prohibit a person from operating on a public way a motor vehicle with normal wear of the suspension system if normal wear does not affect control of the vehicle.

## SUMMARY

This bill makes several changes to the equipment requirements of the motor vehicle laws, including:

1. Making the prohibition of aftermarket equipment more general by removing the list of specific equipment as well as the prohibition on the sale of aftermarket equipment;
2. Removing the excessive or unusual noise prohibition on mufflers;
3. Removing the prohibition on operating a motor vehicle with a modified exhaust system that amplifies or increases motor noise;

4. Reduces from 50% to 35% the amount of light transmittance a tinted window may allow;
5. Requires that certificates and papers required by law and price and mileage labels that are displayed on windows be removable for safety reasons;
6. Expands by 1 inch the sun-screening or tinting material allowed at the top of a windshield;
7. Exempts street rods, custom vehicles and trucks from the requirement that the overall diameter of a wheel with altered rims be within the manufacturer's specifications; and
8. Limits the prohibition against removing suspension systems to when the purpose is to defeat the safe operation of the suspension system.