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An Act To Protect Children in Vehicles from Secondhand Smoke

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

Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §1549 is enacted to read:

§ 1549. Smoking in vehicles when minor under 16 years of age is present

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Motor vehicle" has the same meaning as in Title 29-A, section 101, subsection 42.

B. "Smoking" means inhaling, exhaling, burning or carrying a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, weed, plant, regulated narcotic or other combustible substance.

2. Prohibition. Smoking is prohibited in a motor vehicle by the operator or a passenger when a person who has not attained 16 years of age is present in that motor vehicle, regardless of whether the motor vehicle's windows are open.

3. Prohibition on inspection or search. A motor vehicle, the contents of the motor vehicle or the operator or a passenger in the motor vehicle may not be inspected or searched solely because of a violation of this section.

4. Not a moving violation. A violation of this section is a not a moving violation as defined in Title 29-A, section 101, subsection 44.

5. Penalty; warning. Notwithstanding section 1545, penalties for violations of this section are as set out in this subsection.

A. From September 1, 2008 to August 31, 2009, a law enforcement officer shall give a written warning to an operator or passenger of a motor vehicle who is in violation of this section.

B. Beginning September 1, 2009, a person who violates this section commits a civil violation for which a fine of \$50 must be assessed, except that a law enforcement officer may give a written warning to the operator or a passenger of a motor vehicle who is in violation of this section.

Sec. 2. Effective date. This Act takes effect September 1, 2008.

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