

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 Keep Maine's Transportation Infrastructure Safe by Providing More Sources of Revenue for the Highway Fund

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

Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §501, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2015, c. 206, §4, is further amended to read:

1. Automobiles; pickup trucks. The fee for an automobile, a pickup truck registered for 6,000 pounds or less or a sport utility vehicle used for the conveyance of passengers or interchangeably for passengers or property is \$35 except that the fee for a hybrid vehicle is \$250 and the fee for an electric vehicle is \$350. The fee for a pickup truck registered for more than 6,000 pounds but no more than 10,000 pounds is \$37.

As used in this subsection, "hybrid vehicle" means a motor vehicle that uses 2 or more distinct types of power for purposes of propulsion.

As used in this subsection, "electric vehicle" means a vehicle that uses one or more electric motors for propulsion.

An automobile or sport utility vehicle used for the conveyance of passengers or property is a "combination" vehicle and may be issued a special plate with the word "combination" instead of "Vacationland." A passenger vehicle used under contract with the State, a municipality or a school district to transport students must be designated as "combination." A vehicle owned or operated by parents or legal guardians is exempt from this subsection.

Commercial plates may not be issued for or displayed on an automobile.

A sport utility vehicle may be registered either as an automobile or a truck. A sport utility vehicle with a gross vehicle weight or combined gross vehicle weight in excess of 10,000 pounds and used in the furtherance of a commercial enterprise must be registered as a truck according to its actual gross weight as provided in section 504.

The gross weight of a pickup truck registered as provided by this subsection may not exceed 10,000 pounds. An owner of a pickup truck who operates the pickup truck with a gross weight in excess of 10,000 pounds or the pickup truck drawing a semitrailer with a combined gross weight in excess of 10,000 pounds must register the truck as provided in section 504.

A combination of vehicles consisting of a motor vehicle and a camp trailer is not required to be registered for the gross weight of the combination.

Beginning July 1, 2009, \$10 of the fee must be transferred on a quarterly basis by the Treasurer of State to the TransCap Trust Fund established by Title 30-A, section 6006-G.

Sec. 2. 36 MRSA §1489, as amended by PL 1985, c. 459, Pt. C, §12, is further amended to read:

§ 1489. Crediting and apportionment of tax received

1. Municipal excise tax account. In municipalities the treasurer shall credit money received from excise taxes to an excise tax account, ~~from which it may~~ and, except as provided in subsection 3, funds from that account must be appropriated by the municipality for any purpose for which a municipality may appropriate money for maintenance or improvement of transportation infrastructure.

3. Portion for Highway Fund. The treasurer, in municipalities, and the Secretary of State or agents appointed by the Secretary of State with respect to the unorganized territory, shall deposit the excise tax collected pursuant to section 1484, subsection 3 on trucks or truck tractors that haul trailers and that are registered for more than 26,000 pounds to the Highway Fund. If a treasurer in a municipality or the Secretary of State with respect to the unorganized territory fails to make the deposit required by this subsection, the Department of Transportation may withhold payments due a municipality or county pursuant to Title 23, section 1803-B.

SUMMARY

This bill identifies 3 revenue sources to increase funding to the Highway Fund for transportation infrastructure.

This bill:

1. Imposes an annual registration fee of \$250 on hybrid vehicles and \$350 on electric vehicles instead of the annual \$35 fee imposed on other passenger vehicles;
2. Requires municipalities to spend revenue they collect from excise taxes on transportation projects within their municipality; and
3. Diverts from municipalities to the Highway Fund the excise tax collected on trucks and truck tractors that haul trailers.