

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 Clarify the Laws Regarding Driver's License Suspensions

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

Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §101, sub-§17-A is enacted to read:

17-A. Criminal negligence. "Criminal negligence" has the same meaning as in Title 17-A, section 35, subsection 4.

Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §2436 is enacted to read:

§ 2436. Result as an element; causation

1. Causation. Unless otherwise provided, when causing a result is an element of an offense under this chapter, causation may be found when the result would not have occurred but for the conduct of the defendant, operating either alone or concurrently with another cause.

2. Concurrent causation. In cases in which concurrent causation is generated as an issue, the defendant's conduct must also have been sufficient by itself to produce the result.

Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §2458, sub-§2-A, as amended by PL 2015, c. 13, §1, is further amended to read:

2-A. Minimum suspension for negligent operation. The Secretary of State without preliminary hearing shall suspend for a period of at least 3 years a person's license if the Secretary of State, based on the Secretary of State's records or other sufficient evidence, finds that person to have negligently operated a motor vehicle with criminal negligence in a manner so as to cause the death of another person. ~~Prior to the determination and issuance of the suspension, the Secretary of State shall notify any family of the victim and shall consider written or oral statements received from the family in response to the notice.~~ Upon suspending the person's license, the Secretary of State shall notify that person of an opportunity for hearing as provided in section 2483. If a person whose license is suspended under this subsection requests a hearing, the suspension is stayed pursuant to section 2483.

SUMMARY

This bill applies to motor vehicle offenses the definition of "criminal negligence" and the use of causation as an element of an offense as used in the Maine Criminal Code. This bill also changes the standard for minimum suspension for negligent operation of a motor vehicle causing the death of another person from "negligently" to "with criminal negligence" and removes the provision requiring the Secretary of State to notify any family of the victim or to consider written or oral statements from the family prior to the determination and issuance of the suspension.