

Act No. 493
Public Acts of 2004
Approved by the Governor
December 27, 2004
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**STATE OF MICHIGAN
92ND LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2004**

Introduced by Reps. Daniels, Richardville, Zelenko, Woodward, Reeves, Waters, Stallworth, Phillips, Hood, Hunter, Accavitti, Smith, Cheeks, Paletko, Murphy, Hopgood, Elkins, Lipsey, Bieda, LaSata, Gillard, Meisner, Gleason, Woronchak, Tobocman, Gielegem, Farrah, Hardman, McConico, Stewart, Kolb, Jannick, DeRossett, Julian, Palmer, Law, Wojno, Taub, Garfield, Hune, Milosch and Nofs

ENROLLED HOUSE BILL No. 5364

AN ACT to amend 1949 PA 300, entitled "An act to provide for the registration, titling, sale, transfer, and regulation of certain vehicles operated upon the public highways of this state or any other place open to the general public or generally accessible to motor vehicles and distressed vehicles; to provide for the licensing of dealers; to provide for the examination, licensing, and control of operators and chauffeurs; to provide for the giving of proof of financial responsibility and security by owners and operators of vehicles; to provide for the imposition, levy, and collection of specific taxes on vehicles, and the levy and collection of sales and use taxes, license fees, and permit fees; to provide for the regulation and use of streets and highways; to create certain funds; to provide penalties and sanctions for a violation of this act; to provide for civil liability of owners and operators of vehicles and service of process on residents and nonresidents; to provide for the levy of certain assessments; to provide for the enforcement of this act; to provide for the creation of and to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state and local agencies; to impose liability upon the state or local agencies; to provide appropriations for certain purposes; to repeal all other acts or parts of acts inconsistent with this act or contrary to this act; and to repeal certain parts of this act on a specific date," by amending sections 222, 240, 252g, and 907 (MCL 257.222, 257.240, 257.252g, and 257.907), section 222 as amended by 2002 PA 642, section 240 as amended by 1999 PA 267, section 252g as added by 1981 PA 104, and section 907 as amended by 2004 PA 62, and by adding sections 252i, 252j, 252k, 252l, and 252m.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Sec. 222. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this act, the secretary of state shall issue a registration certificate and a certificate of title when registering a vehicle upon receipt of the required fees. The secretary of state shall issue a flood, rebuilt, rebuilt salvage, salvage, or scrap certificate of title for a vehicle brought into this state from another state or jurisdiction that has a flood, rebuilt, salvage, or scrap certificate of title issued by that other state or jurisdiction.

(2) The secretary of state shall deliver the registration certificate to the owner. The certificate shall contain on its face the date issued, the name and address of the owner, the registration number assigned to the vehicle, and a description of the vehicle as determined by the secretary of state.

(3) The certificate of title shall be manufactured in a manner to prohibit as nearly as possible the ability to reproduce, alter, counterfeit, forge, or duplicate the certificate of title without ready detection. The certificate shall contain all of the following on its face:

(a) The identical information required on the face of the registration certificate.

(b) If the vehicle is a motor vehicle, the number of miles, not including the tenths of a mile, registered on the vehicle's odometer at the time of transfer.

(c) Whether the vehicle is to be used or has been used as a taxi, as a police vehicle, or by a political subdivision of this state, unless the vehicle is owned by a dealer and loaned or leased to a political subdivision of this state for use as a driver education vehicle.

(d) Whether the vehicle is a salvage vehicle.

(e) If the vehicle has previously been issued a rebuilt certificate of title from this state or a comparable certificate of title from any other state or jurisdiction.

(f) Whether the vehicle has been issued a scrap certificate of title from this state or a comparable certificate of title from any other state or jurisdiction.

(g) Whether the vehicle is a flood vehicle or has previously been issued a flood certificate of title from this state or any other state or jurisdiction.

(h) Whether the owner or co-owner or lessee or co-lessee of the vehicle is subject to registration denial under section 219(1)(d).

(i) A statement of the owner's title and of all security interests in the vehicle or in an accessory on the vehicle as set forth in the application.

(j) The date that the application was filed.

(k) Any other information that the secretary of state may require.

(4) The certificate of title shall contain a form for assignment of title or interest and warranty of title by the owner with space for the notation of a security interest in the vehicle and in an accessory on the vehicle, which at the time of a transfer shall be certified and signed, and space for a written odometer mileage statement that is required upon transfer pursuant to section 233a. The certificate of title shall include a description of the proper procedure for transferring the title of a motor vehicle and for maintaining records of that transfer as provided under this act. The certificate of title may also contain other forms that the secretary of state considers necessary to facilitate the effective administration of this act. The certificate shall bear the coat of arms of this state.

(5) The secretary of state shall mail or deliver the certificate of title to the owner or other person as the owner may direct in a separate instrument, in a form prescribed by the secretary of state.

(6) A person who intentionally reproduces, alters, counterfeits, forges, or duplicates a certificate of title or who uses a reproduced, altered, counterfeited, forged, or duplicated certificate of title shall be punished as follows:

(a) If the intent of reproduction, alteration, counterfeiting, forging, duplication, or use was to commit or aid in the commission of an offense punishable by imprisonment for 1 or more years, the person committing the reproduction, alteration, counterfeiting, forging, duplication, or use is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for a period equal to that which could be imposed for the commission of the offense the person had the intent to aid or commit. The court may also assess a fine of not more than \$10,000.00 against the person.

(b) If the intent of the reproduction, alteration, counterfeiting, forging, duplication, or use was to commit or aid in the commission of an offense punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year, the person committing the reproduction, alteration, counterfeiting, forging, duplication, or use is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

(7) The certificate of title for a police vehicle, a vehicle owned by a political subdivision of this state, a salvage vehicle, a rebuilt vehicle, a scrap vehicle, or a flood vehicle shall be different in color from the certificate of title for all other vehicles unless the vehicle is loaned or leased to a political subdivision of this state for use as a driver education vehicle.

(8) A scrap certificate of title shall contain a legend that the vehicle is not to be titled or registered and is to be used for parts or scrap metal only.

(9) A certificate of title shall not be issued for a vehicle that has had a salvage certificate of title unless the certificate of title contains the legend "rebuilt salvage".

Sec. 240. (1) The owner of a motor vehicle who has made a bona fide sale by transfer of his or her title or interest and who has delivered possession of the vehicle and the certificate of title to that vehicle properly endorsed to the purchaser or transferee is not liable for any damages or a violation of law that subsequently results from the use or ownership of the vehicle by another, if the owner, other than a licensed dealer, satisfies the conditions prescribed under subsection (2).

(2) The owner of a motor vehicle, other than a licensed dealer, shall satisfy 1 of the following conditions:

(a) Accompany the purchaser of the vehicle to a secretary of state branch office to assure that the title of the vehicle being sold is transferred.

(b) Maintain a record of the sale for not less than 18 months. As used in this subdivision, "record of the sale" means either a photocopy of the reassigned title or a form or document that includes the name, address, driver license number, and signature of the person to whom the vehicle is sold and the purchase price and date of sale of the vehicle.

(3) A person who violates subsection (2) is responsible for a civil infraction and shall be ordered to pay a civil fine of \$15.00.

(4) A person who violates subsection (2) is presumed to be the last titled owner and to be liable for towing fees and daily storage fees for an abandoned motor vehicle.

Sec. 252g. (1) Subject to section 252a(16), a public sale for a vehicle and its contents that has been determined to be abandoned under section 252a or removed under section 252d shall be conducted in the following manner:

(a) It shall be under the control of the police agency or the agency's designee or the custodian of the vehicle or the custodian's designee.

(b) It shall be open to the public and consist of open auction bidding or bidding by sealed bids. If sealed bids are received, the person submitting the bid shall receive a receipt for the bid from the police agency or the agency's designee or, if the vehicle is being sold under section 252a(16), the custodian of the vehicle.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in sections 252a(17) and 252b(7), it shall be held not less than 5 days after public notice of the sale has been published.

(d) The public notice shall be published at least once in a newspaper having a general circulation within the county in which the vehicle was abandoned. The public notice shall give a description of the vehicle for sale and shall state the time, date, and location of the sale.

(2) The money received from the public sale of the vehicle shall be applied in the following order of priority:

(a) Towing and storage charges.

(b) Expenses incurred by the police agency or the custodian of the vehicle.

(c) Payment of the \$40.00 abandoned vehicle fee described in section 252f(3)(a).

(d) Any extra money shall be sent to the department of treasury's unclaimed property division to be disbursed as follows:

(i) To the secured party, if any, in the amount of the debt outstanding on the vehicle.

(ii) Remainder to the owner. A reasonable attempt shall be made to mail the remainder to the last titled owner. If delivery of the remainder cannot be accomplished, the remainder shall become the property of the unit of government governing the location from which the vehicle was towed.

(3) If there are no bidders on the vehicle, the police agency or the custodian of the vehicle may do 1 of the following:

(a) Turn the vehicle over to the towing firm or the custodian of the vehicle to satisfy charges against the vehicle. However, if the value of the vehicle does not satisfy the towing fees and accrued daily storage fees, the custodian of the vehicle may collect the balance of those unpaid fees from the last titled owner, subject to section 252i.

(b) Obtain title to the vehicle for the police agency or the unit of government the police agency represents, by doing the following:

(i) Paying the towing and storage charges.

(ii) Applying for title to the vehicle.

(c) Hold another public sale under subsection (1).

(4) A person who acquires ownership of a vehicle under subsection (1) or (3) that has been designated as a distressed vehicle shall apply for a salvage certificate of title within 15 days after obtaining the vehicle.

(5) Upon disposition of the vehicle, the police agency shall provide the secretary of state with the vehicle's disposition and the name of the agency that disposed of it and shall cancel the entry in the law enforcement information network.

Sec. 252i. (1) A towing service, custodian of a vehicle, or both, shall not be precluded from the recovery of towing fees or, subject to subsection (2), storage fees from the last titled owner of a vehicle deemed abandoned under section 252a or section 252b, or removed under section 252d.

(2) If a vehicle is released for disposition under section 252b or section 252g, the amount of storage fees that may be collected is whichever 1 of the following is the least amount:

(a) The daily storage rate established by contract or agreement with the law enforcement agency or unit of government that authorized the towing and storage of the vehicle.

(b) The daily storage rate charged by the storage facility.

(c) \$1,000.00.

(3) Subsection (2) does not apply to a commercial vehicle or to a vehicle that is owned or leased by an entity other than an individual.

Sec. 252j. Sections 252a and 252b do not apply to a vehicle that is owned by the same person who owns the private real property on which the vehicle is located and do not prohibit or preempt a local unit of government from regulating the number and placement of vehicles on private property.

Sec. 252k. Except as otherwise provided in section 252l, an owner or lessor of private real property shall post a notice that meets all of the following requirements before authorizing the towing or removal of a vehicle from the real property without the consent of the owner or other person who is legally entitled to possess the vehicle:

(a) The notice shall be prominently displayed at a point of entry for vehicular access to the real property. If the real property lacks curbs or access barriers, not less than 1 notice shall be posted for each 100 feet of road frontage.

(b) The notice clearly indicates in letters not less than 2 inches high on a contrasting background that unauthorized vehicles will be towed away at the owner's expense.

(c) The notice provides the name and telephone number of the towing service responsible for towing or removing vehicles from that property.

(d) The notice is permanently installed with the bottom of the notice located not less than 4 feet from the ground and is continuously maintained on the property for not less than 24 hours before a vehicle is towed or removed.

Sec. 252l. Section 252k does not apply to either of the following:

(a) Real property that is appurtenant to and obviously part of a single- or dual-family residence.

(b) An instance when notice is personally given to the owner or other legally entitled person in control of a vehicle that the area where the vehicle is parked is reserved or otherwise unavailable to unauthorized vehicles and that the vehicle is subject to towing or removal from the private real property without the consent of the owner or other legally entitled person in control of the vehicle.

Sec. 252m. For a period of 1 year beginning on the effective date of the amendatory act that added this section, the secretary of state shall insert notification of the civil fines and sanctions that may be imposed for the violation of sections 240 and 252a(1) into all mailings concerning motor vehicle registration renewal notices and new vehicle title documents.

Sec. 907. (1) A violation of this act, or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to a provision of this act, that is designated a civil infraction shall not be considered a lesser included offense of a criminal offense.

(2) If a person is determined pursuant to sections 741 to 750 to be responsible or responsible "with explanation" for a civil infraction under this act or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to a provision of this act, the judge or district court magistrate may order the person to pay a civil fine of not more than \$100.00 and costs as provided in subsection (4). However, for a violation of section 674(1)(s) or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to section 674(1)(s), the person shall be ordered to pay costs as provided in subsection (4) and a civil fine of not less than \$100.00 or more than \$250.00. For a violation of section 328, the civil fine ordered under this subsection shall be not more than \$50.00. For a violation of section 710d, the civil fine ordered under this subsection shall not exceed \$10.00. For a violation of section 710e, the civil fine and court costs ordered under this subsection shall be \$25.00. For a violation of section 682 or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to section 682, the person shall be ordered to pay costs as provided in subsection (4) and a civil fine of not less than \$100.00 or more than \$500.00. For a violation of section 240, the civil fine ordered under this subsection shall be \$15.00. For a violation of section 252a(1), the civil fine ordered under this subsection shall be \$50.00. Permission may be granted for payment of a civil fine and costs to be made within a specified period of time or in specified installments, but unless permission is included in the order or judgment, the civil fine and costs shall be payable immediately.

(3) Except as provided in this subsection, if a person is determined to be responsible or responsible "with explanation" for a civil infraction under this act or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to a provision of this act while driving a commercial motor vehicle, he or she shall be ordered to pay costs as provided in subsection (4) and a civil fine of not more than \$250.00. If a person is determined to be responsible or responsible "with explanation" for a civil infraction under section 319g or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to section 319g, that person shall be ordered to pay costs as provided in subsection (4) and a civil fine of not more than \$10,000.00.

(4) If a civil fine is ordered under subsection (2) or (3), the judge or district court magistrate shall summarily tax and determine the costs of the action, which are not limited to the costs taxable in ordinary civil actions, and may include all expenses, direct and indirect, to which the plaintiff has been put in connection with the civil infraction, up to the entry of judgment. Costs shall not be ordered in excess of \$100.00. A civil fine ordered under subsection (2) or (3) shall

not be waived unless costs ordered under this subsection are waived. Except as otherwise provided by law, costs are payable to the general fund of the plaintiff.

(5) In addition to a civil fine and costs ordered under subsection (2) or (3) and subsection (4) and the justice system assessment ordered under subsection (14), the judge or district court magistrate may order the person to attend and complete a program of treatment, education, or rehabilitation.

(6) A district court magistrate shall impose the sanctions permitted under subsections (2), (3), and (5) only to the extent expressly authorized by the chief judge or only judge of the district court district.

(7) Each district of the district court and each municipal court may establish a schedule of civil fines, costs, and assessments to be imposed for civil infractions that occur within the respective district or city. If a schedule is established, it shall be prominently posted and readily available for public inspection. A schedule need not include all violations that are designated by law or ordinance as civil infractions. A schedule may exclude cases on the basis of a defendant's prior record of civil infractions or traffic offenses, or a combination of civil infractions and traffic offenses.

(8) The state court administrator shall annually publish and distribute to each district and court a recommended range of civil fines and costs for first-time civil infractions. This recommendation is not binding upon the courts having jurisdiction over civil infractions but is intended to act as a normative guide for judges and district court magistrates and a basis for public evaluation of disparities in the imposition of civil fines and costs throughout the state.

(9) If a person has received a civil infraction citation for defective safety equipment on a vehicle under section 683, the court shall waive a civil fine, costs, and assessments upon receipt of certification by a law enforcement agency that repair of the defective equipment was made before the appearance date on the citation.

(10) A default in the payment of a civil fine or costs ordered under subsection (2), (3), or (4) or a justice system assessment ordered under subsection (14), or an installment of the fine, costs, or assessment, may be collected by a means authorized for the enforcement of a judgment under chapter 40 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.4001 to 600.4065, or under chapter 60 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.6001 to 600.6098.

(11) If a person fails to comply with an order or judgment issued pursuant to this section within the time prescribed by the court, the driver's license of that person shall be suspended pursuant to section 321a until full compliance with that order or judgment occurs. In addition to this suspension, the court may also proceed under section 908.

(12) The court shall waive any civil fine, cost, or assessment against a person who received a civil infraction citation for a violation of section 710d if the person, before the appearance date on the citation, supplies the court with evidence of acquisition, purchase, or rental of a child seating system meeting the requirements of section 710d.

(13) Until October 1, 2003, in addition to any civil fines and costs ordered to be paid under this section, the judge or district court magistrate shall levy an assessment of \$5.00 for each civil infraction determination, except for a parking violation or a violation for which the total fine and costs imposed are \$10.00 or less. An assessment paid before October 1, 2003 shall be transmitted by the clerk of the court to the state treasurer to be deposited into the Michigan justice training fund. An assessment ordered before October 1, 2003 but collected on or after October 1, 2003 shall be transmitted by the clerk of the court to the state treasurer for deposit in the justice system fund created in section 181 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.181. An assessment levied under this subsection is not a civil fine for purposes of section 909.

(14) Effective October 1, 2003, in addition to any civil fines or costs ordered to be paid under this section, the judge or district court magistrate shall order the defendant to pay a justice system assessment of \$40.00 for each civil infraction determination, except for a parking violation or a violation for which the total fine and costs imposed are \$10.00 or less. Upon payment of the assessment, the clerk of the court shall transmit the assessment collected to the state treasury to be deposited into the justice system fund created in section 181 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.181. An assessment levied under this subsection is not a civil fine for purposes of section 909.

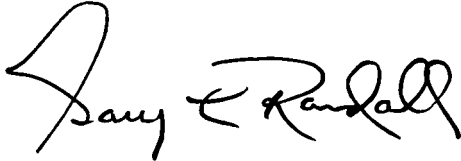
(15) If a person has received a citation for a violation of section 223, the court shall waive any civil fine, costs, and assessment, upon receipt of certification by a law enforcement agency that the person, before the appearance date on the citation, produced a valid registration certificate that was valid on the date the violation of section 223 occurred.

(16) If a person has received a citation for a violation of section 328(1) for failing to produce a certificate of insurance pursuant to section 328(2), the court may waive the fee described in section 328(3)(c) and shall waive any fine, costs, and any other fee or assessment otherwise authorized under this act upon receipt of verification by the court that the person, before the appearance date on the citation, produced valid proof of insurance that was in effect at the time the violation of section 328(1) occurred. Insurance obtained subsequent to the time of the violation does not make the person eligible for a waiver under this subsection.

Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect October 1, 2005.

Enacting section 2. This amendatory act does not take effect unless House Bill No. 4231 of the 92nd Legislature is enacted into law.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.



Clerk of the House of Representatives



Secretary of the Senate

Approved

Governor