

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

H

1

HOUSE BILL 814

Short Title: Neighborhood Occupantless Vehicle. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Saine, Reives, and Johnson (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Transportation, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

May 5, 2021

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE OPERATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD OCCUPANTLESS
3 VEHICLES.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1. G.S. 20-4.01 reads as rewritten:

6 "§ 20-4.01. Definitions.

7 Unless the context requires otherwise, the following definitions apply throughout this
8 Chapter to the defined words and phrases and their cognates:

9 ...

10 (23a) Neighborhood occupantless vehicle. – A low-speed vehicle that is also a fully
11 autonomous vehicle, designed to be operated without an occupant and used to
12 transport cargo. A fully autonomous vehicle is defined in G.S. 20-400.

13 ~~(23a)~~(23b) Nonfunctional airbag. – A replacement airbag that meets any of the
14 following criteria:

15"

16 SECTION 2. Article 3 of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes is amended by adding
17 a new section to read:

18 "§ 20-121.2. Operation of a neighborhood occupantless vehicle on certain roadways;
19 regulations; equipment requirements.

20 (a) Authorization. – A neighborhood occupantless vehicle may operate on streets and
21 highways with the following restrictions:

22 (1) A neighborhood occupantless vehicle may be operated only on streets and
23 highways where the posted speed limit is 45 miles per hour or less.

24 (2) A neighborhood occupantless vehicle must be operated in the right-hand
25 travel lane or as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the street
26 or highway, except when preparing for a left turn.

27 (3) On a highway with two travel lanes, the operator of the neighborhood
28 occupantless vehicle must turn off the roadway to a controlled stop as soon as
29 practicable and when it is safe to do so to allow faster moving vehicles to pass
30 when passing is unsafe because of traffic in the opposite direction or other
31 conditions and there are five or more vehicles immediately behind the
32 neighborhood occupantless vehicle.

33 (b) Operator Defined. – For the purposes of this section, an "operator" is a person that
34 enables or controls, or is responsible for enabling or controlling, with or without remote support,
35 the operation of a neighborhood occupantless vehicle.



1 (c) Equipment Exemptions. – A fully autonomous vehicle that is designed to be operated
2 exclusively and at all times by an automated driving system shall not be subject to any State law
3 or regulation requiring the installation, maintenance, or inspection of vehicle equipment that
4 relates to or supports motor vehicle operation by a human driver, but is not necessary for
5 operation by an automated driving system alone. "Automated driving system" is defined in
6 G.S. 20-400."

7 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective October 1, 2021.