

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

S

4

SENATE BILL 774
Judiciary II Committee Substitute Adopted 5/10/05
Finance Committee Substitute Adopted 8/10/05
House Committee Substitute Favorable 6/28/06

Short Title: Seat Belt Use Enhancements.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 22, 2005

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO MODIFY THE SEAT BELT USE STATUTES TO ENHANCE THE
USE OF SEAT BELTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 20-135.2A reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-135.2A. Seat belt use mandatory.

(a) ~~Each front seat occupant who is 16 years of age or older and each driver of a passenger~~ Except as otherwise provided in G.S. 20-137.1, each occupant of a motor vehicle manufactured with seat belts shall have a seat belt properly fastened about his or her body at all times when the vehicle is in forward motion on a street or highway in this State.

(b) ~~"Passenger Motor Vehicle," as used in this section, means a motor vehicle with motive power designed for carrying 10 passengers or fewer, but does not include a motorecycle, a motorized pedacycle or a trailer.~~

(c) This section shall not apply to any of the following:

- (1) A driver or occupant of a noncommercial motor vehicle with a medical or physical condition that prevents appropriate restraint by a safety belt or with a professionally certified mental phobia against the wearing of vehicle restraints;
- (2) A motor vehicle operated by a rural letter carrier of the United States Postal Service while performing duties as a rural letter carrier and a motor vehicle operated by a newspaper delivery person while actually engaged in delivery of newspapers along the person's specified route;
- (3) A driver or passenger frequently stopping and leaving the vehicle or delivering property from the vehicle if the speed of the vehicle between stops does not exceed 20 miles per hour;

1 (4) Any vehicle registered and licensed as a property carrying vehicle in
2 accordance with G.S. 20-88 while being used for agricultural or
3 ~~commercial purposes; purposes in intrastate commerce; or~~

4 (5) A motor vehicle not required to be equipped with seat safety belts
5 under federal law.

6 (d) Evidence of failure to wear a seat belt shall not be admissible in any criminal
7 or civil trial, action, or proceeding except in an action based on a violation of this
8 section or as justification for the stop of a vehicle or detention of a vehicle operator and
9 passengers.

10 (e) Any driver or passenger who fails to wear a seat belt as required by this
11 section shall have committed an infraction and shall pay a penalty of twenty-five dollars
12 (\$25.00) plus court costs in the sum of fifty dollars (\$50.00). Court costs assessed under
13 this section are for the support of the General Court of Justice and shall be remitted to
14 the State Treasurer. Conviction of an infraction under this section has no other
15 consequence.

16 (f) No drivers license points or insurance surcharge shall be assessed on account
17 of violation of this section.

18 (g) The Commissioner of ~~the Division of~~ Motor Vehicles and the Department of
19 Public Instruction shall incorporate in driver education programs and driver licensing
20 programs instructions designed to encourage compliance with this section as an
21 important means of reducing the severity of injury to the users of restraint devices and
22 on the requirements and penalties specified in this law.

23 (h) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-183, s. 3, effective October 1, 1999."

24 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2006, and applies to
25 offenses committed on or after that date. Law enforcement agencies shall issue only
26 warnings for violations of this act with regards to backseat passengers in motor vehicles
27 from December 1, 2006, to June 30, 2007. On July 1, 2007, law enforcement agencies
28 may begin issuing citations, or taking other enforcement action, for violations of this act
29 with regards to backseat passengers. Front seat passengers not in compliance with this
30 act may continue to be issued citations to ensure compliance with this section.