

2016 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 184

BY REPRESENTATIVE LANCE HARRIS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission to analyze compliance with certain requirements for operation of a motor vehicle and traffic laws since penalties have been increased and to report the findings to the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works and to the member of the House of Representatives representing House District Number 25 on or before January 1, 2017.

WHEREAS, the purpose of traffic regulations is to promote the safe use of the roads, streets, and highways of the state; and

WHEREAS, the intent for assigning penalties for traffic infractions has been to discourage violations by linking monetary consequences to undesirable driver behavior; and

WHEREAS, the imposed penalties serve as a deterrent, protect residents of and visitors to the state, and potentially dissuade an offender's repeat behavior; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, one thousand seventy-four vehicles were involved in traffic related fatal accidents, which resulted in six hundred eighty-one fatalities in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, of the two million nine hundred seventy-two thousand seven hundred twenty-four licensed drivers in the state of Louisiana, approximately four hundred eighty thousand do not meet the compulsory motor vehicle liability security requirements provided by law; and

WHEREAS, the legislature has increased fines, in some instances doubling or tripling the current financial penalties, and implemented court approved community service requirements for violation of certain traffic offenses; and

WHEREAS, the legislature has increased penalties and reinstatement fees related to compulsory motor vehicle security, which include but are not limited to operating a motor vehicle without the required motor vehicle liability security, and for failing to provide

required proof of compliance as established in Act No. 641, and operating a bus without insurance as established in Act No. 559 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session; and

WHEREAS, the legislature has increased penalties for violations of traffic laws, which include but are not limited to driving while intoxicated offenses as established in Act No. 385, careless operation of a motor vehicle as established in Act No. 650, and use of certain cellular devices while traveling through school zones as established in Act No. 410 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session; school bus drivers operating a vehicle while intoxicated as established in Act No. 137 of the 2013 Regular Legislative Session; overtaking and passing school buses as established in Act No. 259, safety belt violations in Orleans Parish as established in Act No. 413, driving while intoxicated offenses as established in Act No. 571, and operating a vehicle while intoxicated as established in Act No. 470 of the 2012 Regular Legislative Session; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the increased penalties has been touted as a strategy to eliminate traffic-related infractions and to ultimately reduce traffic-related deaths.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission to analyze compliance with certain requirements for operation of a motor vehicle and traffic laws for which penalties have been increased to determine if such increase has resulted in enhanced driver compliance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study conducted by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission shall include consideration of the relationship between the amount of the fine or severity of the penalty imposed and the number of traffic offenses that occur, in particular driving while intoxicated offenses, operating a vehicle while intoxicated, safety belt violations, use of cellular devices in school zones, careless operation of a vehicle, and failure to obtain and/or maintain compulsory motor vehicle security.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study conducted by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission shall include a determination of the following:

(1) Whether increased penalties for traffic-related infractions have led to fewer traffic citations, fewer motor vehicle accidents, and fewer traffic-related fatalities?

(2) Whether increased penalties for traffic-related infractions led to a change in driver behavior since the increased penalties have been in effect?

(3) Whether the increase in compulsory insurance reinstatement fees has yielded an increase in compliance with compulsory motor vehicle liability security?

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Transportation Research Center and the Department of Insurance shall provide any assistance required by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission to complete the study requested herein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission shall prepare and provide a written report to the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works and to the member of the House of Representatives representing House District Number 25 on or before January 1, 2017.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the chairman of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES