

LEGISLATIVE BILL 931

Approved by the Governor August 06, 2020

Introduced by Halloran, 33; Clements, 2; Dorn, 30; Erdman, 47; Gragert, 40; Hughes, 44; Moser, 22; Murman, 38; Slama, 1; Brewer, 43.

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the Nebraska Rules of the Road; to amend sections 60-6,298 and 60-6,301, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2018; to change a harvested products maximum weight overload exception; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections.
Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 60-6,298, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2018, is amended to read:

60-6,298 (1)(a) The Department of Transportation or the Nebraska State Patrol, with respect to highways under its jurisdiction including the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, and local authorities, with respect to highways under their jurisdiction, may in their discretion upon application and good cause being shown therefor issue a special, continuing, or continuous permit in writing authorizing the applicant or his or her designee:

(i) To operate or move a vehicle, a combination of vehicles, or objects of a size or weight of vehicle or load exceeding the maximum specified by law when such permit is necessary:

(A) To further the national defense or the general welfare;

(B) To permit movement of cost-saving equipment to be used in highway or other public construction or in agricultural land treatment; or

(C) Because of an emergency, an unusual circumstance, or a very special situation;

(ii) To operate vehicles, for a distance up to one hundred twenty miles, loaded up to fifteen percent greater than the maximum weight specified by law, or up to ten percent greater than the maximum length specified by law, or both, except that any combination with two or more cargo-carrying units, not including the truck-tractor, also known as a longer combination vehicle, may only operate for a distance up to seventy miles loaded up to fifteen percent greater than the maximum weight specified by law, or up to ten percent greater than the maximum length specified by law, or both, when carrying grain or other seasonally harvested products from the field where such grain or products are harvested to storage, market, or stockpile in the field or from stockpile or farm storage to market or factory when failure to move such grain or products in abundant quantities would cause an economic loss to the person or persons whose grain or products are being transported or when failure to move such grain or products in as large quantities as possible would not be in the best interests of the national defense or general welfare. The distance limitation may be waived for vehicles when carrying dry beans from the field where harvested to storage or market when dry beans are not normally stored, purchased, or used within the permittee's local area and must be transported more than one hundred twenty miles to an available marketing or storage destination. No permit shall authorize a weight greater than twenty thousand pounds on any single axle;

(iii) To transport an implement of husbandry which does not exceed twelve and one-half feet in width during daylight hours, except that the permit shall not allow transport on holidays;

(iv) To operate one or more recreational vehicles, as defined in section 71-4603, exceeding the maximum width specified by law if movement of the recreational vehicles is prior to retail sale and the recreational vehicles comply with subdivision (2)(k) of section 60-6,288;

(v) To operate an emergency vehicle for purposes of sale, demonstration, exhibit, or delivery, if the applicant or his or her designee is a manufacturer or sales agent of the emergency vehicle. No permit shall be issued for an emergency vehicle which weighs over sixty thousand pounds on the tandem axle; or

(vi) To transport during daylight hours divisible loads of livestock forage in bale form which do not exceed twelve feet in width, except that the permit shall not allow transport on holidays.

(b) No permit shall be issued under subdivision (a)(i) of this subsection for a vehicle carrying a load unless such vehicle is loaded with an object which exceeds the size or weight limitations, which cannot be dismantled or reduced in size or weight without great difficulty, and which of necessity must be moved over the highways to reach its intended destination. No permit shall be required for the temporary movement on highways other than dustless-surfaced state highways and for necessary access to points on such highways during daylight hours of cost-saving equipment to be used in highway or other public construction or in agricultural land treatment when such temporary movement is necessary and for a reasonable distance.

(2) The application for any such permit shall specifically describe the vehicle, the load to be operated or moved, whenever possible the particular highways for which permit to operate is requested, and whether such permit is requested for a single trip or for continuous or continuing operation. The

permit shall include a signed affirmation under oath that, for any load sixteen feet high or higher, the applicant has contacted any and all electric utilities that have high voltage conductors and infrastructure that cross over the roadway affected by the move and made arrangements with such electric utilities for the safe movement of the load under any high voltage conductors owned by such electric utilities.

(3) The department or local authority is authorized to issue or withhold such permit at its discretion or, if such permit is issued, to limit the number of days during which the permit is valid, to limit the number of trips, to establish seasonal or other time limitations within which the vehicles described may be operated on the highways indicated, or to issue a continuous or continuing permit for use on all highways, including the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. The permits are subject to reasonable conditions as to periodic renewal of such permit and as to operation or movement of such vehicles. The department or local authority may otherwise limit or prescribe conditions of operation of such vehicle or vehicles, when necessary to assure against undue damage to the road foundations, surfaces, or structures or undue danger to the public safety. The department or local authority may require such undertaking or other security as may be deemed necessary to compensate for any injury to any roadway or road structure.

(4) Every such permit shall be carried in the vehicle to which it refers and shall be open to inspection by any peace officer, carrier enforcement officer, or authorized agent of any authority granting such permit. Each such permit shall state the maximum weight permissible on a single axle or combination of axles and the total gross weight allowed. No person shall violate any of the terms or conditions of such special permit. In case of any violation, the permit shall be deemed automatically revoked and the penalty of the original limitations shall be applied unless:

(a) The violation consists solely of exceeding the size or weight specified by the permit, in which case only the penalty of the original size or weight limitation exceeded shall be applied; or

(b) The total gross load is within the maximum authorized by the permit, no axle is more than ten percent in excess of the maximum load for such axle or group of axles authorized by the permit, and such load can be shifted to meet the weight limitations of wheel and axle loads authorized by such permit. Such shift may be made without penalty if it is made at the state or commercial scale designated in the permit. The vehicle may travel from its point of origin to such designated scale without penalty, and a scale ticket from such scale, showing the vehicle to be properly loaded and within the gross and axle weights authorized by the permit, shall be reasonable evidence of compliance with the terms of the permit.

(5) The department or local authority issuing a permit as provided in this section may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations with respect to the issuance of permits provided for in this section.

(6) The department shall make available applications for permits authorized pursuant to subdivisions (1)(a)(ii) and (1)(a)(iii) of this section in the office of each county treasurer. The department may make available applications for all other permits authorized by this section to the office of the county treasurer and may make available applications for all permits authorized by this section to any other location chosen by the department.

(7) The department or local authority issuing a permit may require a permit fee of not to exceed twenty-five dollars, except that:

(a) The fee for a continuous or continuing permit may not exceed twenty-five dollars for a ninety-day period, fifty dollars for a one-hundred-eighty-day period, or one hundred dollars for a one-year period; and

(b) The fee for permits issued pursuant to subdivision (1)(a)(ii) of this section shall be twenty-five dollars. Permits issued pursuant to such subdivision shall be valid for thirty days and shall be renewable four times for a total number of days not to exceed one hundred fifty days per calendar year.

A vehicle or combination of vehicles for which an application for a permit is requested pursuant to this section shall be registered under section 60-3,147 or 60-3,198 for the maximum gross vehicle weight that is permitted pursuant to section 60-6,294 before a permit shall be issued.

Sec. 2. Section 60-6,301, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2018, is amended to read:

60-6,301 When any motor vehicle, semitrailer, or trailer is operated upon the highways of this state carrying a load in excess of the maximum weight permitted by section 60-6,294, the load shall be reduced or shifted to within such maximum tolerance before being permitted to operate on any public highway of this state, except that:

(1) If any motor vehicle, semitrailer, or trailer exceeds the maximum load on only one axle, only one tandem axle, or only one group of axles when (a) the distance between the first and last axle of such group of axles is twelve feet or less, (b) the excess axle load is no more than five percent in excess of the maximum load for such axle, tandem axle, or group of axles permitted by such section, while the vehicle or combination of vehicles is within the maximum gross load, and (c) the load on such vehicle is such that it can be shifted or the configuration of the vehicle can be changed so that all axles, tandem axle, or groups of axles are within the maximum permissible limit for such axle, tandem axle, or group of axles, such shift or change of configuration may be made without penalty;

(2) Any motor vehicle, semitrailer, or trailer carrying only a load of

livestock may exceed the maximum load as permitted by such section on only one axle, only one tandem axle, or only one group of axles when the distance between the first and last axle of the group of axles is six feet or less if the excess load on the axle, tandem axle, or group of axles is caused by a shifting of the weight of the livestock by the livestock and if the vehicle or combination of vehicles is within the maximum gross load as permitted by such section;

(3) With a permit issued by the Department of Transportation or the Nebraska State Patrol, a truck with an enclosed body and a compacting mechanism, designed and used exclusively for the collection and transportation of garbage or refuse, may exceed the maximum load as permitted by such section by no more than twenty percent on only one axle, only one tandem axle, or only one group of axles when the vehicle is laden with garbage or refuse if the vehicle is within the maximum gross load as permitted by such section. There shall be a permit fee of ten dollars per month or one hundred dollars per year. The permit may be issued for one or more months up to one year, and the term of applicability shall be stated on the permit;

(4) Any motor vehicle, semitrailer, or trailer carrying any kind of a load, including livestock, which exceeds the legal maximum gross load by five percent or less may proceed on its itinerary and unload the cargo carried thereon to the maximum legal gross weight at the first unloading facility on the itinerary where the cargo can be properly protected. All material so unloaded shall be cared for by the owner or operator of such vehicle at the risk of such owner or operator; and

(5) Any motor vehicle, semitrailer, or trailer carrying grain or other seasonally harvested products may operate from the field where such grain or products are harvested to storage, market, or stockpile in the field or from stockpile or farm storage to market or factory up to seventy miles with a load that exceeds the maximum load permitted by section 60-6,294 by fifteen percent on any tandem axle, group of axles, and gross weight. Any truck with no more than a single rear axle carrying grain or other seasonally harvested products may operate from the field where such grain or products are harvested to storage, market, or stockpile in the field or from stockpile or farm storage to market or factory up to seventy miles with a load that exceeds the maximum load permitted by section 60-6,294 by fifteen percent on any single axle and gross weight. The owner or a representative of the owner of the agricultural product shall furnish the driver of the loaded vehicle a signed statement of origin and destination.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit to be operated on the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways any vehicle or combination of vehicles which exceeds any of the weight limitations applicable to such system as contained in section 60-6,294.

If the maximum legal gross weight or axle weight of any vehicle is exceeded by five percent or less and the arresting peace officer or carrier enforcement officer has reason to believe that such excessive weight is caused by snow, ice, or rain, the officer may issue a warning citation to the operator.

Sec. 3. Original sections 60-6,298 and 60-6,301, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2018, are repealed.