STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

AN ACT

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- FOREIGN VEHICLES

Introduced By: Representatives Place, Chippendale, Filippi, Roberts, and Nardone

Date Introduced: January 26, 2022

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 31-7 of the General Laws entitled "Foreign Vehicles" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

31-7-3.1. State student transportation provider exemption.

Notwithstanding the provisions of §§ 31-7-1 and 31-7-3, any student transportation provider, registered in Massachusetts or Connecticut, retained by or via the Rhode Island department of education, to provide student transportation services, may utilize student transportation vehicles, as defined in § 31-1-3 currently registered in Massachusetts or Connecticut, to provide student transportation services in Rhode Island, provided that:

(1) Each student transportation vehicle has current, valid Massachusetts or Connecticut registration and inspection stickers.

(2) Each student transportation vehicle is covered by an insurance policy meeting the requirements of § 31-22-10.21.

(3) Rhode Island department of education has verified compliance with subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this section.

(4) The retained provider complies with the registration requirement for each student transportation vehicle, pursuant to § 31-7-2.

SECTION 2. Section 31-10-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-10 entitled "Operators' and Chauffeurs' Licenses" is hereby amended to read as follows:

31-10-5. Special restrictions for drivers for compensation.
(a) No person who is under the age of twenty-one (21) years shall drive any school bus transporting school children or any motor vehicle when in use for the transportation of persons or property for compensation nor in either event until he or she has been licensed as a chauffeur for either purpose and the license so indicates. Colleges and universities shall be exempt from the requirement for a public plate for vehicles used to shuttle only students or employees to various points within the college or university campus or if a college or university owned or leased vehicle is used for the occasional transportation of college or university employees or students either on or off campus provided that the vehicle is operated by a college or university employee possessing a valid Rhode Island chauffeur's license or a commercial drivers license with a passenger endorsement. Provided, however, that the college or university shall operate the shuttle service and there shall be no specific charge for the transportation of students or employees. The division of motor vehicles shall not issue a chauffeur's license for either purpose unless the applicant has had at least one year of driving experience prior to the application, and has filed with the division of motor vehicles one or more certificates signed by a total of at least three (3) responsible people to whom he or she is well known certifying to the applicant's good character and habits and the administrator of the division of motor vehicles is fully satisfied as to the applicant's competency and fitness to be so employed.

(b) In addition to the requirements provided in subsection (a) of this section, any person attempting to obtain a chauffeur's license to drive a school bus transporting school children shall, prior to being certified:

(1) Successfully complete a ten (10) hour school bus driver training course conducted by the department of revenue or the department of revenue's designee and file a certificate of successful completion with the division of motor vehicles. The curriculum of that course and the accreditation of courses offered shall be pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the division of motor vehicles;

(2) Pass a written examination prepared and given by the department of revenue or the department of revenue's designee.

(3) Pass a driving test in a school bus of a like type which that person will be employed to drive. The test will be prepared and given by the department of revenue.

(c) Prior to issuing a certificate to any person who intends to drive a school bus, the division of motor vehicles shall conduct a search of that person's motor vehicle record. Any violation of any safety regulation or conviction of any motor vehicle law in this or any other state shall be grounds for refusing to issue a certificate.

(d) Notwithstanding the express license requirements in this section, drivers currently
licensed in Massachusetts or Connecticut to operate student transportation vehicles and employed
by retained transportation providers shall be allowed to operate in Rhode Island.

Transportation Vehicles" is hereby amended to read as follows:


No person shall operate any student transportation vehicle, and the owner or custodian of
a student transportation vehicle shall not permit the same to be operated to convey students unless
the following requirements are complied with:

(1) The operator of a pupil transportation vehicle shall not allow the number of school
students riding in the pupil transportation vehicle at any one time to exceed the number of adequate
seats therein nor shall the operator drive said bus until each student is seated.

(2) No person shall operate a pupil transportation vehicle referred to in this section, nor
knowingly allow any passenger to ride in such vehicle unless the operator and all passengers are
wearing a safety belt which is properly adjusted and fastened.

(3) All doors shall be kept closed while the pupil transportation vehicle is in motion. The
vehicle shall have an audible open door warning alarm and an audible back up warning alarm.

(4) No fueling shall take place while any pupil transportation vehicle is occupied by
passengers.

(5) Each pupil transportation vehicle shall be equipped with Type I Class A turn signal
lamps, which shall have a four-way hazard warning signal switch to cause simultaneous flashing
of the turn signal lamps which may be activated when a pupil transportation vehicle is approaching
a stop to load or discharge school students and when needed as a vehicular traffic hazard warning.
Each pupil transportation vehicle shall also be equipped with front and rear alternating flashing
school bus red signal lamps, which shall remain flashing when school pupils are entering or leaving
the pupil transportation vehicle. All aforementioned lamps shall comply with applicable Federal
Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and any applicable rules and regulations promulgated by the
department of motor vehicles. The operator of a pupil transportation vehicle shall cause its
headlamps to be illuminated while such bus is in operation.

(6) Any person who operates such a pupil transportation vehicle shall not permit the
boarding or discharging of school students therefrom unless the pupil transportation vehicle is
stopped as close as is practicable to the right-hand side or edge of the ways and shall announce
when discharging passengers there from that all persons who wish to cross to the other side of the
way shall do so by passing in front of the pupil transportation vehicle immediately upon alighting
therefrom. No person shall operate a pupil transportation vehicle away from the point of boarding
until it is safe for all discharged passengers who wish to cross to the other side have done so. The
monitor requirement of § 16-21-1 shall not apply to pupil transportation vehicles.

(7) Each pupil transportation vehicle shall be required to be equipped with one pair of
adequate chock blocks and three (3) flares in compliance with United States Motor Vehicle D.O.T.
Safety Standard No. 125, which shall be placed upon the roadway in conformance with section 14
B of chapter 85 when such vehicle becomes disabled upon the traveled portion of any way, and
seat belts for each permanent seating accommodation designed and installed in compliance with
applicable United States Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

(8) All pupil transportation vehicles shall include an approved emergency airway and
bodily fluid spill kits.

(9) All pupil transportation vehicles used to transport school students under the provisions
of this section shall display sticker as authorized by the department of motor vehicles for a
reasonable fee established by the department of motor vehicles.

(10) All persons operating a pupil transportation vehicle, to convey students, shall
hold a Rhode Island chauffeurs chauffeurs' license and shall have passed a written test as may be
prescribed by the division of motor vehicles; provided, however, those drivers currently licensed
in Massachusetts or Connecticut to operate student transportation vehicles and employed by
retained transportation providers may also operate in Rhode Island. In addition, all persons who
operate a pupil transportation vehicle to convey students shall submit to a national and statewide
criminal and driving record background check by the hiring agency.

SECTION 4. Chapter 31-22.1 of the General Laws entitled "Pupil Transportation Vehicles"
is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

31-22.1-5. Out-of-state pupil transportation vehicle operators.

(a) A provider driver may operate student transportation vehicles, appropriate for their
licensure, provided that:

(1) As applicable, the provider driver possess a current, valid Massachusetts or Connecticut
commercial driver's license with a "P" and "S" endorsement and a current, valid Massachusetts
school bus certificate if licensed in Massachusetts.

(2) As applicable, the provider driver possesses a current, valid Massachusetts or
Connecticut driver's license that is the equivalent of a Rhode Island license, with the appropriate
endorsement allowing for the transportation of school children.

(3) The Rhode Island department of education (RIDE) has verified compliance with
subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this section.

(4) As applicable, the provider driver obtains a school bus certificate, governed by the

(5) As applicable, the provider driver obtains a pupil transportation certificate governed by division of motor vehicles regulation 280-RICR-30-05-5.4, on or before April 10, 2022.

(6) The provider driver complies with license requirements under §§ 31-10-5 and 31-22.1-3(10).

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon passage.
EXPLANATION

BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- FOREIGN VEHICLES

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1 This act would enable some Massachusetts and Connecticut based students transportation
2 providers without Rhode Island licensed and registered vehicles to operate in Rhode Island, under
3 limited conditions.
4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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