

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2005**

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**HOUSE BILL 355**

Short Title: Restrict Use of Blue and Red Vehicle Lights. (Public)

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Sponsors: Representatives McGee, Rapp (Primary Sponsors); Alexander, L. Allen, Barnhart, Blackwood, Bordsen, Brown, Capps, Carney, Cleveland, Coates, Culp, Daughtridge, Dollar, Earle, England, Folwell, Frye, Goforth, Gulley, Haire, Hill, Hilton, Hollo, Howard, Jeffus, Johnson, Justice, Lewis, Moore, Nye, Parmon, Pate, Preston, Sauls, Setzer, Sherrill, Starnes, Steen, Sutton, Vinson, Walend, Walker, West, Williams, Wilson, and Womble.

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Referred to: Judiciary III.

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February 23, 2005

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO RESTRICT THE USE OF CERTAIN RED AND BLUE LIGHTS ON  
VEHICLES, INCLUDING RED AND BLUE WINDSHIELD WASHER LIGHTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 20-130.1 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 20-130.1. Use of red or blue lights on vehicles prohibited; exceptions.**

(a) It is unlawful for any person to install or activate or operate a red light in or on any vehicle in this State. As used in this subsection, unless the context requires otherwise, "red light" means an operable red light not sealed in the manufacturer's original package which: (i) is designed for use by an emergency vehicle or is similar in appearance to a red light designed for use by an emergency vehicle; and (ii) can be operated by use of the vehicle's battery, vehicle's electrical system, or a dry cell battery. As used in this subsection, the term "red light" shall also mean any forward facing red light installed on a vehicle after initial manufacture, including a red windshield washer light.

(b) The provisions of subsection (a) of this section do not apply to the following:

- (1) A police car;
- (2) A highway patrol car;
- (3) A vehicle owned by the Wildlife Resources Commission and operated exclusively for law-enforcement purposes;
- (4) An ambulance;
- (5) A vehicle used by an organ procurement organization or agency for the recovery and transportation of blood, human tissues, or organs for transplantation;

- 1 (6) A fire-fighting vehicle;
- 2 (7) A school bus;
- 3 (8) A vehicle operated by any member of a municipal or rural fire  
4 department in the performance of his duties, regardless of whether  
5 members of that fire department are paid or voluntary;
- 6 (9) A vehicle of a voluntary lifesaving organization (including the private  
7 vehicles of the members of such an organization) that has been  
8 officially approved by the local police authorities and which is manned  
9 or operated by members of that organization while answering an  
10 official call;
- 11 (10) A vehicle operated by medical doctors or anesthetists in emergencies;
- 12 (11) A motor vehicle used in law enforcement by the sheriff, or any salaried  
13 rural policeman in any county, regardless of whether or not the county  
14 owns the vehicle;
- 15 (11a) A vehicle operated by the State Fire Marshal or his representatives in  
16 the performance of their duties, whether or not the State owns the  
17 vehicle;
- 18 (12) A vehicle operated by any county fire marshal, assistant fire marshal,  
19 or emergency management coordinator in the performance of his  
20 duties, regardless of whether or not the county owns the vehicle;
- 21 (13) A light required by the Federal Highway Administration;
- 22 (14) A vehicle operated by a transplant coordinator who is an employee of  
23 an organ procurement organization or agency when the transplant  
24 coordinator is responding to a call to recover or transport human  
25 tissues or organs for transplantation;
- 26 (15) A vehicle operated by an emergency medical service as an emergency  
27 support vehicle; and
- 28 (16) A State emergency management vehicle.

29 (c) It is unlawful for any person to possess a blue light or to install, activate, or  
30 operate a blue light in or on any vehicle in this State, except for a publicly owned  
31 vehicle used for law enforcement purposes or any other vehicle when used by law  
32 enforcement officers in the performance of their official duties. As used in this  
33 subsection, unless the context requires otherwise, "blue light" means any forward facing  
34 blue light installed on a vehicle after initial manufacture, including a blue windshield  
35 washer light; a light placed on a vehicle dash that is similar in appearance to a blue light  
36 used by a law enforcement officer; or an operable blue light which:

- 37 (1) Is not (i) being installed on, held in inventory for the purpose of being  
38 installed on, or held in inventory for the purpose of sale for installation  
39 on a vehicle on which it may be lawfully operated or (ii) installed on a  
40 vehicle which is used solely for the purpose of demonstrating the blue  
41 light for sale to law enforcement personnel;
- 42 (1a) Is designed for use by an emergency vehicle, or is similar in  
43 appearance to a blue light designed for use by an emergency vehicle;  
44 and

1                   (2)    Can be operated by use of the vehicle's battery, the vehicle's electrical  
2                                system, or a dry cell battery.

3           (d)    Repealed by Session Laws 1999-249, s. 1.

4           (e)    Violation of subsection (a) or (c) of this section is a Class 1 misdemeanor."

5                   **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective December 1, 2005, and applies to  
6 offenses committed on or after that date.