



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Joseph G. Aninao

H.B. 395

129th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Maag, Brenner, Terhar, J. Adams, Goodwin, Wachtmann, Blair, Yuko

BILL SUMMARY

- Increases the speed limit on interstate freeways to 70 miles per hour for all vehicles.
- Limits the use of the left-hand lane of interstate freeways to occasions when a vehicle is exiting the freeway, overtaking and passing a slower vehicle, or allowing other vehicles to enter the right-hand lane of the right-hand roadway, or when traffic or road conditions exist that would make operation of the vehicle in the right-hand lane unsafe.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Interstate freeway speed limits

The bill increases the speed limit on interstate freeways to 70 m.p.h. at all times for all vehicles.¹ Under current law, certain interstate freeways have a speed limit of 55 m.p.h. for all vehicles and other interstate freeways have a speed limit of 65 m.p.h. for all vehicles.² The bill also prohibits any person from operating a motor vehicle, trackless trolley, or streetcar in excess of 70 m.p.h. on an interstate freeway.³

The bill does *not* affect the speed limits that apply to freeways that are built to the standards and specifications applicable to interstate freeways but are not part of the interstate system. Commonly known as interstate "lookalike" freeways, these freeways carry "United States Route" designations. The speed limit on some of these freeways is

¹ R.C. 4511.21(B)(14).

² R.C. 4511.21(B)(11), (12), (13), and (14).

³ R.C. 4511.21(D)(7).

55 m.p.h. for all motor vehicles; on others, the speed limit is 55 m.p.h. for motor vehicles weighing more than 8,000 pounds empty weight and noncommercial buses and 65 m.p.h. for motor vehicles weighing 8,000 pounds or less empty weight and commercial buses.⁴

Left-hand lane usage on interstate freeways

The bill prohibits any vehicle from being driven in the left-hand lane of the right-hand roadway of a freeway that is part of the interstate system except when exiting the freeway, overtaking and passing a slower vehicle, or when allowing other vehicles to enter the right-hand lane of the right-hand roadway, or when traffic or road conditions exist that would make operation of the vehicle in the right-hand lane unsafe. The operator of a vehicle driven in the left-hand lane to overtake and pass a slower vehicle or to allow traffic to enter the right-hand lane must return to the right-hand lane, or, if available, a center lane, as soon as traffic and road conditions make it safe to do so.

Whoever violates this prohibition generally is guilty of a minor misdemeanor.⁵ If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to one of a number of specified motor vehicle or traffic offenses, the offender is guilty of a fourth degree misdemeanor.⁶ If, within one year of the offense, the offender previously has been convicted of two or more such motor vehicle or traffic offenses, the offender is guilty of a third degree misdemeanor.⁷

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	12-13-11

H0395-I-129.docx/jc

⁴ R.C. 4511.21(B)(11), (12), and (13).

⁵ Punishable by a fine of not more than \$150; no jail term may be imposed.

⁶ Punishable by a fine of not more than \$250; a jail term of not more than 30 days, or both.

⁷ Punishable by a fine of not more than \$500; a jail term of not more than 60 days, or both.

