



2011 SENATE BILL 194

September 20, 2011 – Introduced by Senators LAZICH and GALLOWAY, cosponsored by Representatives PETROWSKI, BERNIER, BROOKS, SPANBAUER and MURSAU. Referred to Committee on Transportation and Elections.

1 **AN ACT** *to renumber and amend* 348.27 (7m); and *to create* 348.01 (2) (d) of
2 the statutes; **relating to:** operating certain three-vehicle combinations on the
3 highways.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Current law generally prohibits any person from operating a vehicle on a highway while towing two or more vehicles unless an exception applies or the operator holds an appropriate permit issued by the Department of Transportation (DOT). DOT may issue annual or consecutive month permits for certain three-vehicle combinations that consist of the following vehicles:

1. A towing vehicle.
2. A recreational vehicle or camping trailer.
3. A trailer for a personal recreational vehicle.

Under current law, the overall length of the combination of vehicles may not exceed 60 feet or, if the middle vehicle in the three-vehicle combination is equipped with brakes, 65 feet. Unless it is not structurally possible, the lighter of the towed vehicles must occupy the last position in the three-vehicle combination. The towed vehicles must be for the use of the operator of the towing vehicle. A three-vehicle combination may not be operated if specified highway or weather conditions are present.

This bill modifies the requirements for operation of these three-vehicle combinations and allows their operation without a permit. The bill allows a person to operate, without a permit, a three-vehicle combination consisting of the following:

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1. A towing vehicle.
2. A recreational vehicle or camping trailer.
3. Another recreational vehicle or camping trailer, or a trailer carrying any vehicle for recreational use or carrying no load. A “vehicle for recreational use” is defined to include a bicycle, moped, motor bicycle, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, snowmobile, boat, sailboard, personal watercraft, or electric personal assistive mobility device, but does not include an automobile, motor truck, motor home, play vehicle, or in-line skates.

Under the bill, the heavier of the towed vehicles must occupy the middle position of the three-vehicle combination unless it is not structurally possible. The overall length of the combination of vehicles may not exceed 65 feet and, if the total loaded weight of all towed vehicles exceeds 3,000 pounds, one of the towed vehicles must be equipped with brakes. The bill does not modify current law restrictions on the operation of three-vehicle combinations under specified highway or weather conditions.

For further information see the *state* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 348.01 (2) (d) of the statutes is created to read:

2 348.01 (2) (d) “Vehicle for recreational use” includes a bicycle, moped, motor
3 bicycle, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, snowmobile, boat, as defined in s. 30.50 (2),
4 sailboard, as defined in s. 30.50 (11), personal watercraft, or electric personal
5 assistive mobility device, but does not include an automobile, motor truck, motor
6 home, play vehicle, or in-line skates.

7 **SECTION 2.** 348.27 (7m) of the statutes is renumbered 348.08 (1) (i) and
8 amended to read:

9 348.08 (1) (i) ~~The department may issue an annual or consecutive month~~
10 ~~permit for the movement of a~~ A 3-vehicle combination consisting of a towing vehicle
11 and, in order by weight, with the lighter of the towed vehicles as the 3rd vehicle in
12 the 3-vehicle combination unless not structurally possible, a recreational vehicle or
13 camping trailer as the 2nd vehicle, and a recreational vehicle, camping trailer, or

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1 trailer for a personal recreational vehicle carrying any vehicle for recreational use
2 or carrying no load as the 3rd vehicle, if the overall length of the combination of
3 vehicles does not exceed ~~60~~ 65 feet ~~or, if the 2nd vehicle in the 3-vehicle combination~~
4 and, if the total weight, including any load, of all towed vehicles exceeds 3,000
5 pounds, one of the towed vehicles is equipped with brakes adequate to control the
6 movement of and to stop and hold it, ~~does not exceed 65 feet, and the towed vehicles~~
7 ~~are for the use of the operator of the towing vehicle. A permit under this subsection~~
8 ~~may be issued only by the department, regardless of the highways to be used. The~~
9 ~~department may designate the routes that may be used by the permittee. The fee~~
10 ~~for an annual permit under this subsection is \$40. The fee for a consecutive month~~
11 ~~permit under this subsection shall be determined in the manner provided in s. 348.25~~
12 ~~(8) (bm), except that the \$40 fee for an annual permit under this subsection shall be~~
13 ~~used in the computation. No 3-vehicle combination may operate under this~~
14 ~~paragraph if highway or weather conditions include heavy snow, freezing rain, icy~~
15 ~~roads, high winds, limited visibility, or upon a highway that is closed or partially~~
16 ~~closed by the department due to highway conditions.~~

SECTION 3. Initial applicability.

17
18 (1) This act first applies to 3-vehicle combinations operated on the effective
19 date of this subsection.

20 (END)