

ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION, PUBLIC WORKS AND
INDEPENDENT AUTHORITIES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 3070

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: NOVEMBER 13, 2008

The Assembly Transportation, Public Works and Independent Authorities Committee reports favorably and with amendments Assembly Bill No. 3070.

As reported, this amended bill would revise the restrictions on those drivers who hold special learner's permits, examination permits, and provisional driver's licenses. The bill also changes the name of a "provisional" driver's license to a "probationary" driver's license.

Under this State's graduated driver licensing system for new drivers, persons who are 16 years old can obtain a special learner's permit for the purpose of supervised practice driving if they have completed an approved six-hour behind-the-wheel driving course. A person who is 17 years of age or older can obtain an examination permit for this same purpose, but is not required to take the behind-the-wheel course. Drivers who have completed the requirements of a special learner's permit or an examination permit are issued a provisional license. Provisional driver's license holders practice unsupervised driving to prepare for a basic driver's license. Holders of these special learner's permits, examination permits, and probationary licenses are subject to certain passenger, hourly, and other restrictions. The bill revises the hourly and passenger restrictions.

Under the bill, permit holders and probationary license holders who are under 21 years old would be permitted to transport only one passenger besides any dependents. This one-passenger restriction would not apply if the permit or probationary license holder is accompanied by a parent or guardian. The passenger restriction also does not apply to permit or probationary license holders who are at least 21 years old under current law; this remains unchanged under the bill.

The restrictions on overnight driving hours also would be extended under the bill to between 11:01 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. for holders of examination permits and probationary licenses. Under current law, these drivers are restricted from operating their motor vehicles between 12:01 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. This is consistent with the current

11:01 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. restriction that currently applies to holders of a special learner's permit.

The bill also requires the Division of Highway Traffic Safety in the Department of Law and Public Safety to develop and undertake a public education campaign to inform the public of the bill's provisions.

Finally, the bill clarifies that permit and probationary license holders are not permitted to use any interactive wireless communication device while operating a motor vehicle whether it is hand-held or hands-free.

The provisions of this bill implement certain recommendations of the Teen Driver Study Commission made in the commission's March 2008 Final Report.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amendments make technical corrections to references in the bill to the Division of Highway Traffic Safety in the Department of Law and Public Safety, special learner's permits, automobile driving education courses, and restores the references to drivers' schools.