

Act No. 349
Public Acts of 1998
Approved by the Governor
October 16, 1998
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**STATE OF MICHIGAN
89TH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 1998**

Introduced by Rep. Fitzgerald

Reps. Anthony, Baird, Basham, Birkholz, Cassis, DeHart, Freeman, Gernaat, Gilmer, Gire, Godchaux, Goschka, Gubow, Gustafson, Hammerstrom, Hanley, Horton, Jansen, Jelinek, Jellema, Johnson, Kelly, Law, London, Lowe, Mans, Martinez, McBryde, Middaugh, Middleton, Nye, Profit, Prusi, Rocca, Scott, Sikkema, Varga, Vaughn, Voorhees and Willard named co-sponsors

ENROLLED HOUSE BILL No. 4959

AN ACT to amend 1949 PA 300, entitled "An act to provide for the registration, titling, sale, transfer, and regulation of certain vehicles operated upon the public highways of this state or any other place open to the general public or generally accessible to motor vehicles and distressed vehicles; to provide for the licensing of dealers; to provide for the examination, licensing, and control of operators and chauffeurs; to provide for the giving of proof of financial responsibility and security by owners and operators of vehicles; to provide for the imposition, levy, and collection of specific taxes on vehicles, and the levy and collection of sales and use taxes, license fees, and permit fees; to provide for the regulation and use of streets and highways; to create certain funds; to provide penalties and sanctions for a violation of this act; to provide for civil liability of owners and operators of vehicles and service of process on residents and nonresidents; to provide for the levy of certain assessments; to provide for the enforcement of this act; to provide for the creation of and to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state and local agencies; to repeal all other acts or parts of acts inconsistent with this act or contrary to this act; and to repeal certain parts of this act on a specific date," by amending sections 624a, 624b, and 625n (MCL 257.624a, 257.624b, and 257.625n), section 624a as amended and section 624b as added by 1996 PA 493 and section 625n as added by 1996 PA 491.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Sec. 624a. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), a person who is an operator or occupant shall not transport or possess alcoholic liquor in a container that is open or uncapped or upon which the seal is broken within the passenger compartment of a vehicle upon a highway, or within the passenger compartment of a moving vehicle in any place open to the general public or generally accessible to motor vehicles, including an area designated for the parking of vehicles, in this state.

(2) A person may transport or possess alcoholic liquor in a container that is open or uncapped or upon which the seal is broken within the passenger compartment of a vehicle upon a highway or other place open to the general public or generally accessible to motor vehicles, including an area designated for the parking of vehicles in this state, if the vehicle does not have a trunk or compartment separate from the passenger compartment, the container is enclosed or encased, and the container is not readily accessible to the occupants of the vehicle.

(3) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor. As part of the sentence, the person may be ordered to perform community service and undergo substance abuse screening and assessment at his or her own expense as described in section 703(1) of the Michigan liquor control code of 1998, 1998 PA 58, MCL 436.1703. A court shall not

accept a plea of guilty or nolo contendere for a violation of this section from a person charged solely with a violation of section 625(6).

(4) This section does not apply to a passenger in a chartered vehicle authorized to operate by the state transportation department.

Sec. 624b. (1) A person less than 21 years of age shall not knowingly transport or possess alcoholic liquor in a motor vehicle as an operator or occupant unless the person is employed by a licensee under the Michigan liquor control code of 1998, 1998 PA 58, MCL 436.1101 to 436.2303, a common carrier designated by the liquor control commission under the Michigan liquor control code of 1998, 1998 PA 58, MCL 436.1101 to 436.2303, the liquor control commission, or an agent of the liquor control commission and is transporting or having the alcoholic liquor in a motor vehicle under the person's control during regular working hours and in the course of the person's employment. This section does not prevent a person less than 21 years of age from knowingly transporting alcoholic liquor in a motor vehicle if a person at least 21 years of age is present inside the motor vehicle. A person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor. As part of the sentence, the person may be ordered to perform community service and undergo substance abuse screening and assessment at his or her own expense as described in section 703(1) of the Michigan liquor control code of 1998, 1998 PA 58, MCL 436.1703.

(2) Within 30 days after the conviction for a violation of subsection (1) by the operator of a motor vehicle, which conviction has become final, the arresting law enforcement officer or the officer's superior may make a complaint before the court from which the warrant was issued. The complaint shall be under oath and shall describe the motor vehicle in which alcoholic liquor was possessed or transported by the operator, who is less than 21 years of age, in committing the violation and requesting that the motor vehicle be impounded as provided in this section. Upon the filing of the complaint, the court shall issue to the owner of the motor vehicle an order to show cause why the motor vehicle should not be impounded. The order to show cause shall fix a date and time for a hearing, which shall not be less than 10 days after the issuance of the order. The order shall be served by delivering a true copy to the owner not less than 3 full days before the date of hearing or, if the owner cannot be located, by sending a true copy by certified mail to the last known address of the owner. If the owner is a nonresident of the state, service may be made upon the secretary of state as provided in section 403.

(3) If the court determines upon the hearing of the order to show cause, from competent and relevant evidence, that at the time of the commission of the violation the motor vehicle was being driven by the person less than 21 years of age with the express or implied consent or knowledge of the owner in violation of subsection (1), and that the use of the motor vehicle is not needed by the owner in the direct pursuit of the owner's employment or the actual operation of the owner's business, the court may authorize the impounding of the vehicle for a period of not less than 15 days or more than 30 days. The court's order authorizing the impounding of the vehicle shall authorize a law enforcement officer to take possession without other process of the motor vehicle wherever located and to store the vehicle in a public or private garage at the expense and risk of the owner of the vehicle. The owner of the vehicle may appeal the order to the circuit court and the provisions governing the taking of appeals from judgments for damages apply to the appeal. This section does not prevent a bona fide lienholder from exercising rights under a lien.

(4) A person who knowingly transfers title to a motor vehicle for the purpose of avoiding this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(5) A law enforcement agency, upon determining that a person less than 18 years of age allegedly violated this section, shall notify the parent or parents, custodian, or guardian of the person as to the nature of the violation if the name of a parent, guardian, or custodian is reasonably ascertainable by the law enforcement agency. The notice required by this subsection shall be made not later than 48 hours after the law enforcement agency determines that the person who allegedly violated this section is less than 18 years of age and may be made in person, by telephone, or by first-class mail.

(6) As used in this section, "alcoholic liquor" means that term as defined in section 105 of the Michigan liquor control code of 1998, 1998 PA 58, MCL 436.1105.

Sec. 625n. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section and in addition to any other penalty provided for in this act, the judgment of sentence for a conviction for a violation of section 625(1) described in section 625(8)(b) or (c), a violation of section 625(3) described in section 625(10)(b) or (c), a violation of section 625(4), (5), or (7), or a violation of section 904(4) or (5) may require 1 of the following with regard to the vehicle used in the offense if the defendant owns the vehicle in whole or in part or leases the vehicle:

(a) Forfeiture of the vehicle if the defendant owns the vehicle in whole or in part.

(b) Return of the vehicle to the lessor if the defendant leases the vehicle.

(2) The vehicle may be seized pursuant to an order of seizure issued by the court having jurisdiction upon a showing of probable cause that the vehicle is subject to forfeiture or return to the lessor.

(3) The forfeiture of a vehicle is subject to the interest of the holder of a security interest who did not have prior knowledge of or consent to the violation.

(4) Within 14 days after the defendant's conviction for a violation described in subsection (1), the prosecuting attorney may file a petition with the court for the forfeiture of the vehicle or to have the court order return of a leased vehicle to the lessor. The prosecuting attorney shall give notice by first-class mail or other process to the defendant and his or her attorney, to all owners of the vehicle, and to any person holding a security interest in the vehicle that the court may require forfeiture or return of the vehicle.

(5) If a vehicle is seized before disposition of the criminal proceedings, a defendant who is an owner or lessee of the vehicle may move the court having jurisdiction over the proceedings to require the seizing agency to file a lien against the vehicle and to return the vehicle to the owner or lessee pending disposition of the criminal proceedings. The court shall hear the motion within 7 days after the motion is filed. If the defendant establishes at the hearing that he or she holds the legal title to the vehicle or that he or she has a leasehold interest and that it is necessary for him or her or a member of his or her family to use the vehicle pending the outcome of the forfeiture action, the court may order the seizing agency to return the vehicle to the owner or lessee. If the court orders the return of the vehicle to the owner or lessee, the court shall order the defendant to post a bond in an amount equal to the retail value of the vehicle, and shall also order the seizing agency to file a lien against the vehicle.

(6) Within 14 days after notice by the prosecuting attorney is given under subsection (4), the defendant, an owner, lessee, or holder of a security interest may file a claim of interest in the vehicle with the court. Within 21 days after the expiration of the period for filing claims, but before or at sentencing, the court shall hold a hearing to determine the legitimacy of any claim, the extent of any co-owner's equity interest, the liability of the defendant to any co-lessee, and whether to order the vehicle forfeited or returned to the lessor. In considering whether to order forfeiture, the court shall review the defendant's driving record to determine whether the defendant has multiple convictions under section 625 or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to section 625, or multiple suspensions, restrictions, or denials under section 904, or both. If the defendant has multiple convictions under section 625 or multiple suspensions, restrictions, or denials under section 904, or both, that factor shall weigh heavily in favor of forfeiture.

(7) If a vehicle is forfeited under this section, the unit of government that seized the vehicle shall sell the vehicle and dispose of the proceeds in the following order of priority:

(a) Pay any outstanding security interest of a secured party who did not have prior knowledge of or consent to the commission of the violation.

(b) Pay the equity interest of a co-owner who did not have prior knowledge of or consent to the commission of the violation.

(c) Satisfy any order of restitution entered in the prosecution for the violation.

(d) Pay the claim of each person who shows that he or she is a victim of the violation to the extent that the claim is not covered by an order of restitution.

(e) Pay any outstanding lien against the property that has been imposed by a governmental unit.

(f) Pay the proper expenses of the proceedings for forfeiture and sale, including, but not limited to, expenses incurred during the seizure process and expenses for maintaining custody of the property, advertising, and court costs.

(g) The balance remaining after the payment of items (a) through (f) shall be distributed by the court having jurisdiction over the forfeiture proceedings to the unit or units of government substantially involved in effecting the forfeiture. Seventy-five percent of the money received by a unit of government under this subdivision shall be used to enhance enforcement of the criminal laws and 25% of the money shall be used to implement the crime victim's rights act, 1985 PA 87, MCL 780.751 to 780.834. A unit of government receiving money under this subdivision shall report annually to the department of management and budget the amount of money received under this subdivision that was used to enhance enforcement of the criminal laws and the amount that was used to implement the crime victim's rights act, 1985 PA 87, MCL 780.751 to 780.834.

(8) The court may order the defendant to pay to a co-lessee any liability determined under subsection (6). The order may be enforced in the same manner as a civil judgment.

(9) The return of a vehicle to the lessor under this section does not affect or impair the lessor's rights or the defendant's obligations under the lease.

(10) A person who knowingly conceals, sells, gives away, or otherwise transfers or disposes of a vehicle with the intent to avoid forfeiture or return of the vehicle to the lessor under this section is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

(11) The failure of the court or prosecutor to comply with any time limit specified in this section does not preclude the court from ordering forfeiture of a vehicle or its return to a lessor, unless the court finds that the owner or claimant suffered substantial prejudice as a result of that failure.

(12) The forfeiture provisions of this section do not preclude the prosecuting attorney from pursuing a forfeiture proceeding under any other law of this state or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to this section.

Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect October 1, 1999.

Enacting section 2. This amendatory act does not take effect unless all of the following bills of the 89th Legislature are enacted into law:

- (a) Senate Bill No. 268.
- (b) Senate Bill No. 269.
- (c) Senate Bill No. 625.
- (d) Senate Bill No. 627.
- (e) Senate Bill No. 869.
- (f) Senate Bill No. 870.
- (g) Senate Bill No. 953.
- (h) House Bill No. 4210.
- (i) House Bill No. 4576.
- (j) House Bill No. 4960.
- (k) House Bill No. 4961.
- (l) House Bill No. 5122.
- (m) House Bill No. 5123.
- (n) House Bill No. 5951.
- (o) House Bill No. 5952.
- (p) House Bill No. 5953.
- (q) House Bill No. 5954.
- (r) House Bill No. 5955.
- (s) House Bill No. 5956.



Clerk of the House of Representatives.



Secretary of the Senate.

Approved-----

Governor.