

PROCEDURE FOR INTERSECTION TRAFFIC FLOW WHEN TRAFFIC SIGNAL IS NOT WORKING

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Senate Bill 521 as passed by the Senate

Sponsor: Sen. Rick Jones

House Committee: Transportation and Infrastructure

Senate Committee: Transportation

Complete to 3-5-18

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 521 would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to establish and clarify procedures for traffic flow when a traffic light is out of service or malfunctioning, for instance during a power failure.

Currently under the Vehicle Code, the driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection has to yield the right of way to a vehicle that has entered the intersection from a different highway. When two vehicles enter an intersection from different highways at the same time, the driver of the vehicle on the left has to yield to the vehicle on the right.

The bill would add that the driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection controlled by a traffic control signal would have to do the following if the signal facing the driver had no colored lights or arrows, failed to clearly indicate the right of way, or was otherwise malfunctioning:

- Stop. The driver would have to stop at a clearly marked stop line or, if none, before entering a crosswalk or, if none, before entering the intersection.
- Yield the right of way to all vehicles in the intersection or approaching on an intersecting road, if those vehicles would be an immediate hazard while the driver was moving within or across the intersection.
- Exercise ordinary care while proceeding through the intersection.

The provisions proposed by the bill would not apply to either of the following:

- An intersection controlled by a traffic control signal that is flashing yellow unless certain events occur, including activation by an emergency vehicle.
- A traffic control signal located in a school zone that is flashing yellow only during prescribed periods of time.

MCL 257.649

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would result in a minimal increase in revenues to the state. A violation of the bill would be a civil infraction. Revenue collected from payment of civil infraction penalties is

deposited into the state Justice System Fund, which supports various justice-related endeavors in the judicial branch and the Departments of State Police, Corrections, and Health and Human Services.

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