

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003**

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SENATE DRS55217-RWz-50A* (4/4)

Short Title: HOV Lanes - Emergency Vehicles.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Jenkins.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO EXEMPT MOVEMENT AROUND EMERGENCY VEHICLES FROM
HOV LANE RESTRICTIONS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 20-146.2(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) HOV Lanes. – The Department of Transportation may designate one or more travel lanes as high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on streets and highways on the State Highway System and cities may designate one or more travel lanes as high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on streets on the Municipal Street System. HOV lanes shall be reserved for vehicles with a specified number of passengers as determined by the Department of Transportation or the city having jurisdiction over the street or highway. When HOV lanes have been designated, and have been appropriately marked with signs or other markers, they shall be reserved for privately or publicly operated buses, and automobiles or other vehicles containing the specified number of persons. Where access restrictions are applied on HOV lanes through designated signing and pavement markings, vehicles shall only cross into or out of an HOV lane at designated ~~openings~~ openings, unless the vehicle moves out of the lane to avoid an emergency vehicle, in accordance with G.S. 20-157(f). A motor vehicle shall not travel in a designated HOV lane if the motor vehicle has more than three axles, regardless of the number of occupants. HOV lane restrictions shall not apply to motorcycles or vehicles designed to transport 15 or more passengers, regardless of the actual number of occupants. HOV lane restrictions shall not apply to emergency vehicles. As used in this subsection, the term "emergency vehicle" means any law enforcement, fire, police, or other government vehicle, and any public and privately owned ambulance or emergency service vehicle, when responding to an emergency."

SECTION 2. This act becomes effective September 1, 2004, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date.