~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

AMENDED

April 26, 2017

**H. 3516**

Introduced by Reps. Simrill, Lucas, White, G.M. Smith, Pope, Stringer, W. Newton, Bales, Clary, Cole, Delleney, Herbkersman, Hixon, Sandifer, Douglas, Knight, Erickson, Henegan, Ridgeway, Williams, Jefferson, Ott, Govan, Henderson, V.S. Moss, Martin, Spires, Funderburk, D.C. Moss, Brown, Whipper, Cobb‑Hunter, Felder, Bernstein, J.E. Smith, Clemmons, Clyburn, Daning, Cogswell, Davis, B. Newton, Anthony, Crosby, S. Rivers, Thigpen, Hosey, Murphy, Hardee, Weeks, King, Sottile and Anderson

S. Printed 4/26/17--S.

Read the first time March 2, 2017.

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 12‑28‑310, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE MOTOR FUEL USER FEE, SO AS TO PHASE IN AN INCREASE OF TEN CENTS ON THE FEE OVER FIVE YEARS; TO AMEND SECTIONS 56‑11‑410 AND 56‑11‑450, BOTH RELATING TO THE ROAD TAX, SO AS TO INCREASE THE ROAD TAX IN THE SAME MANNER AS THE MOTOR FUEL USER FEE; TO AMEND SECTION 56‑3‑620, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO THE BIENNIAL REGISTRATION OF A MOTOR VEHICLE, SO AS TO INCREASE THE FEE FOR THE REGISTRATION; BY ADDING SECTION 56‑3‑627 SO AS TO REQUIRE EACH RESIDENT TO PAY AN INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE FEE UPON FIRST REGISTERING ANY VEHICLE AND CERTAIN OTHER ITEMS IN THIS STATE AND TO SPECIFY THE MANNER IN WHICH THE FEE IS CALCULATED, CREDITED, AND ADMINISTERED; BY ADDING SECTION 56‑3‑645 SO AS TO IMPOSE A ROAD USE FEE ON CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES THAT OPERATE ON FUEL THAT IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE MOTOR FUEL USER FEE; TO AMEND SECTION 12‑36‑2110, RELATING TO THE MAXIMUM SALES TAX, SO AS TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM TAX ON CERTAIN ITEMS; TO AMEND SECTION 12‑36‑2120, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO EXEMPTIONS FROM THE STATE SALES TAX, SO AS TO EXEMPT ANY ITEM SUBJECT TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE FEE; TO AMEND SECTION 12‑36‑1710, RELATING TO THE CASUAL EXCISE TAX, SO AS TO PROVIDE THAT MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THE TAX; AND TO AMEND ARTICLE 23, CHAPTER 37, TITLE 12, RELATING TO MOTOR CARRIERS, SO AS TO DEFINE TERMS, TO PROVIDE THAT THE ARTICLE DOES NOT APPLY TO A SMALL COMMERCIAL VEHICLE, TO PROVIDE THAT CERTAIN VEHICLES ARE ASSESSED AND APPORTIONED BASED ON A ROAD USE FEE INSTEAD OF PROPERTY TAXES, TO PROVIDE THAT THE ROAD USE FEE IS DUE AT THE SAME TIME AS REGISTRATION FEES, TO PROVIDE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ROAD USE FEE, AND TO EXEMPT CERTAIN SEMITRAILERS, TRAILERS, LARGE COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES, AND BUSES FROM AD VALOREM TAXATION.

Amend Title To Conform

Whereas, this act is a comprehensive approach to address the effect that the deteriorating transportation infrastructure system has on our State and its residents, tourists, and economy; and

Whereas, our transportation infrastructure system has begun to deteriorate, causing safety and economic problems. It is time to focus the resources of our State in an efficient, effective manner to stop that deterioration and to set our State on the path toward building a first‑class road network that is the envy of the nation; and

This act will provide the Department of Transportation with the resources it needs to effectively and immediately address the highway, road, and bridge maintenance and construction needs and to enable the department to provide safe and high‑quality infrastructure for the decades ahead; and

Whereas, the hazardous road conditions found throughout our State endanger residents and visitors alike. This act recognizes that safety is a paramount concern to drivers traversing the State and must also be a priority when the Department of Transportation identifies projects to undertake; and

Whereas, this act makes necessary reforms to the Department of Transportation’s operational footprint to provide a more effective, efficient delivery of services free from conflicts of interest that undermine the public’s confidence that the taxes that they pay are being applied in a fair, even-handed manner across the State; and

Whereas, the revenue generated by this act will provide the Department of Transportation with additional resources, but it will also place an additional financial burden on the State’s taxpayers. This act strikes an appropriate balance between the needs of our transportation infrastructure and the needs of the taxpayers by providing targeted tax relief that will stimulate economic growth, which, in turn, will generate revenue growth from the sales of motor vehicles, from the sale of fuel for motor vehicles, and from other provisions contained in this act; and

Whereas, this act allocates to the Department of Transportation adequate resources to build and maintain a safe highway system for the residents of our State while preserving for taxpayers the means to engage in commerce and other daily activities that provide the Department of Transportation with those resources. Now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 57‑11‑20(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A)(1) All state revenues and state monies dedicated by statute to the operation of the department must be deposited into either the ‘State Highway Fund’, ~~or~~ the ‘State Non‑Federal Aid Highway Fund’ ,or the ‘Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund’. ~~Both~~ All funds must be held and managed by the State Treasurer separate and distinct from the general fund, except as to monies utilized by the State Treasurer for the payment of principal or interest on state highway bonds as provided by law. Interest income from the State Highway Fund must be deposited to the credit of the State Highway Fund. Interest income from the Non‑Federal Aid Highway Fund must be deposited to the credit of the Non‑Federal Aid Highway Fund. Interest income from the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund must be deposited to the credit of the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund. The commission may commit up to the maximum annual debt service provided in Article X, Section 13 of the South Carolina Constitution into a special fund to be used for the sole purpose of paying the principal and interest, as it comes due, on bonds issued for the construction or maintenance of state highways, or both. This special account will be designated as the State Highway Construction Debt Service Fund.

(2) The Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund must be used exclusively for the repairs, maintenance, and improvements to the existing transportation system.”

SECTION 2. A. Section 12‑28‑310 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding subsections at the end to read:

“(D) On July 1, 2017, and each July first thereafter until after July 1, 2022, the department shall permanently increase the amount of the user fee imposed pursuant to subsection (A) by two cents, for a total of twelve cents. All of the funds raised by the increase in the motor fuel user fee imposed by this subsection must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund.

(E)(1) The department shall increase the amount of the motor fuel user fee imposed pursuant to subsections (A) and (D) on an annual basis by an inflation factor equal to the annual average percentage adjustment over the last ten completed calendar years of the Consumer Price Index for all‑urban consumers as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, but not to exceed two percent. Upon determining the increase, the department shall round the price to the nearest one‑tenth of a cent. If the increase is exactly between two‑tenths of a cent, the department must round the price up to the higher of the two. The department determines the increase in the motor fuel user fee by March thirty‑first of each year, and the increase takes effect the following July first. The department must notify affected taxpayers of the motor fuel user fee to be in effect for the coming July first to June thirtieth period.

(2) The provisions of item (E)(1) must be suspended by the Director of the Department of Revenue if they result in the motor fuel user fee exceeding the same in any North Carolina county bordering South Carolina or any Georgia county bordering South Carolina. The suspension must remain in place until such time as the motor fuel user fees in all North Carolina counties bordering South Carolina and all Georgia counties bordering South Carolina are greater than South Carolina’s motor fuel user fee.”

B. The first CPI adjustment made pursuant to this SECTION takes effect July 1, 2023.

SECTION 3. A. Section 56‑11‑410 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 56‑11‑410. (A) A road tax for the privilege of using the streets and highways in this State is imposed upon every motor carrier. The tax is equivalent to ~~sixteen cents a gallon~~ the user fee imposed pursuant to Section 12‑28‑310, calculated on the amount of gasoline or other motor fuel used by the motor carrier in its operations within this State. Except as credit for certain taxes as provided for in this chapter, taxes imposed on motor carriers by this chapter are in addition to taxes imposed upon the carriers by any other provision of law.

(B) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, all of the road tax funds collected in excess of sixteen cents a gallon after accounting for the credit provided in Section 56‑11‑450, must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund.”

B. Section 56‑11‑450(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) Every motor carrier subject to the tax imposed under this chapter is entitled to a credit on the tax equivalent to ~~sixteen cents per gallon~~ the user fee imposed pursuant to Section 12‑28‑310 on all gasoline or other motor fuel purchased by the carrier within this State for use in operations either within or without this State and upon which gasoline or other motor fuel the tax imposed by the laws of this State has been paid by the carrier. Evidence of the payment of the tax in such form as may be required by or is satisfactory to the Department of Motor Vehicles must be furnished by each carrier claiming the credit.”

SECTION 4. A. Section 56‑3‑620 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 353 of 2008, is further amended to read:

“Section 56‑3‑620. (A) For persons sixty‑five years of age or older or persons who are handicapped, as defined in Section 56‑3‑1950, the biennial registration fee for every private passenger motor vehicle, excluding trucks, is ~~twenty~~ thirty‑six dollars.

(B) ~~Beginning July 1, 1987,~~ For persons under the age of sixty‑five years the biennial registration fee for every private passenger motor vehicle, excluding trucks, is ~~twenty‑four~~ forty dollars.

(C) For persons sixty‑five years of age or older, the biennial registration fee for a property‑carrying vehicle with a gross weight of six thousand pounds or less is ~~thirty~~ forty‑six dollars.

(D) For persons who are sixty‑four years of age, the biennial registration fee for a private passenger motor vehicle, excluding trucks, is ~~twenty‑two~~ thirty‑eight dollars.

(E) Applicable truck fees, established by Section 56‑3‑660, are not negated by this section.

(F) Annual license plate validation stickers which are issued for nonpermanent license plates on certified South Carolina public law enforcement vehicles must be issued without charge.

(G) From each biennial registration and license fee collected, sixteen dollars must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund.”

B. This SECTION takes effect January 1, 2018.

SECTION 5. A. Article 5, Chapter 3, Title 56 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 56‑3‑627. (A) In order to account for the necessary road maintenance caused by each item traversing the roads of this State, in addition to the registration fees imposed by this chapter, the owner of each vehicle or other item that is required to be registered pursuant to this chapter must pay an infrastructure maintenance fee upon first registering the vehicle or other item. Also, the owner of each trailer or semi‑trailer must pay the fee upon first registering the trailer or semi‑trailer. The Department of Motor Vehicles may not issue a registration until the infrastructure maintenance fee has been collected. The infrastructure maintenance fee must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund.

(B) If upon purchasing or leasing the item from a dealer, the owner first registers the item in this State, then the fee equals five percent, not to exceed five hundred dollars, of the gross proceeds of sales, or sales price, as those terms are defined in Chapter 36, Title 12. If the dealer holds a South Carolina retail license or offers to license and register the item, then the dealer must collect the fee and remit it to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

(C)(1) If upon purchasing or leasing the item from a person other than a dealer, the owner first registers the item in this State, then the fee equals five percent, not to exceed five hundred dollars, of the fair market value of the item.

(2) Excluded from the fee imposed pursuant to this subsection are:

(a) items transferred:

(i) to members of the immediate family;

(ii) to a legal heir, legatee, or distributee;

(iii) from an individual to a partnership upon formation of a partnership, or from a stockholder to a corporation upon formation of a corporation;

(iv) to a licensed motor vehicle or motorcycle dealer for the purpose of resale;

(v) to a financial institution for the purpose of resale;

(vi) as a result of repossession to any other secured party, for the purpose of resale;

(b) the fair market value of an item transferred to the seller or secured party in partial payment;

(c) gross proceeds of transfers of items specifically exempted by Section 12‑36‑2120 from the sales or use tax;

(d) items where a sales or use tax has been paid on the transaction necessitating the transfer.

(3) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall require every applicant for a certificate of title to supply information it considers necessary as to the time of purchase, the purchase price, and other information relative to the determination of fair market value. If the fee is based upon total purchase price as defined in this subsection, the department shall require a submission of a bill of sale and the signature of the owner subject to the perjury statutes of this State.

(4) For purposes of this subsection:

(a) ‘Fair market value’ means the total purchase price less any trade‑in, or the valuation shown in a national publication of used values adopted by the department, less any trade‑in.

(b) ‘Immediate family’ means spouse, parents, children, sisters, brothers, grandparents, and grandchildren.

(c) ‘Total purchase price’ means the price of an item agreed upon by the buyer and seller with an allowance for a trade‑in, if applicable.

(D) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (B) and (C), the maximum fee of five hundred dollars must be increased by fifty dollars on July 1, 2018, and on July 1, 2019, until the maximum fee equals six hundred dollars.

(E)(1) If upon purchasing or leasing the item, the owner first registers the item in another state, and subsequently registers the item in this State, then the fee equals two hundred fifty dollars. On July 1, 2018, the department shall permanently increase the amount of the user fee imposed pursuant to this subsection by fifty dollars, and the department shall continue to increase the fee permanently on each July first thereafter by fifty dollars until the total fee equals six hundred dollars.

(2) This subsection does not apply if the owner of the item is serving on active duty in the armed forces of the United States. The exclusion allowed by this item also extends to items owned by the spouse or dependent of a person serving on active duty in the armed forces of the United States.

(F)(1)(a) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall transfer eighty percent of every fee collected on motor vehicles pursuant to subsections (B) and (C), but not to exceed two hundred forty dollars, to the Department of Transportation to be allocated to the state‑funded resurfacing program. The Department of Transportation shall develop and implement a needs‑based methodology to distribute revenue within the state‑funded resurfacing program, which shall include consideration of pavement condition on a county‑by‑county basis, to ensure that each county in the State is guaranteed funding for resurfacing.

(b) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall transfer twenty percent of every fee collected on motor vehicles pursuant to subsections (B) and (C), but not to exceed sixty dollars, to the South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984 Fund.

(2) The Department of Transportation shall reduce the allocation to the state‑funded resurfacing program required in item (1) in proportion to the amounts transferred to the South Carolina Transportation Infrastructure Bank pursuant to subsection (G) and in proportion to the amounts required by the Department of Transportation to fund repairs, maintenance, and improvements to the existing transportation system.

(G)(1) The Department of Transportation shall identify bridge and road projects to be financed utilizing nontax revenue transferred to the bank by the Department of Transportation in an amount equal to the financing requirements related to projects selected pursuant to this section, provided that:

(a) Fifty million dollars in revenue utilized by the bank shall be used to finance bridge replacement, rehabilitation projects, and expansion and improvements on existing roads in the State Highway System.

(b) Funds in excess of fifty million dollars utilized by the bank shall be used to finance expansion and improvements to existing mainline interstates.

(2) Funds transferred to the bank pursuant to this section may not be used to finance projects approved by the bank before July 1, 2013. The bank shall submit all projects proposed to be financed pursuant to subsection (B) to the Joint Bond Review Committee as provided in Section 11‑43‑180, before approving a project for financing.

(3) Following consideration by the Joint Bond Review Committee, the bank shall approve the projects to be financed. Upon approval, the bank shall provide the Department of Transportation with written notice that identifies each project selected, the amount of nontax revenue that must be transferred to the bank for financing each project, a schedule for the transfers, and any other information necessary to carrying out the financing of each project.

(4) Upon receipt of the notice provided in item (3), the Department of Transportation shall transfer nontax revenue to the bank in the amounts and upon the schedule provided in the notice. The department shall take any other action identified in the notice that is necessary for financing each project.

(5) Projects financed utilizing funds transferred pursuant to this subsection do not require a local match.

(H) The Secretary of Transportation shall apply funds supplanted by the operation of this section to prioritized bridge and resurfacing needs.

(I) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, any transaction exempt pursuant to Section 12‑36‑2120(25), is also exempt from the infrastructure maintenance fee.”

B. This SECTION takes effect on July 1, 2017.

SECTION 6. A. Chapter 3, Title 56 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 56‑3‑645. (A) In addition to the registration fees imposed by this chapter, the owner of motor vehicles that are powered:

(1) exclusively by electricity, hydrogen, or any fuel other than motor fuel, as defined in Section 12‑28‑110(39), that are not subject to motor fuel user fees imposed by Chapter 28, Title 12 shall pay a biennial road use fee of one hundred twenty dollars; and

(2) by a combination of motor fuel subject to motor fuel user fees imposed by Chapter 28, Title 12 and electricity, hydrogen, or any fuel other than motor fuel that is not subject to motor fuel user fees imposed by Chapter 28, Title 12 shall pay a biennial road use fee of sixty dollars.

(B) All of the fees collected pursuant to this section must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund.

(C) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall collect this fee at the same time as the vehicle subject to the fee is registered.”

B. This SECTION takes effect January 1, 2018.

SECTION 7. A. Section 12‑36‑2110(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 12‑36‑2110. (A)(1) The maximum tax imposed by this chapter is three hundred dollars for each sale made after June 30, 1984, or lease executed, after August 31, 1985, of each:

~~(1)~~(a) aircraft, including unassembled aircraft which is to be assembled by the purchaser, but not items to be added to the unassembled aircraft;

~~(2)~~(b) motor vehicle;

~~(3)~~(c) motorcycle;

~~(4)~~(d) boat;

~~(5)~~(e) trailer or semitrailer, pulled by a truck tractor, as defined in Section 56‑3‑20, and horse trailers, but not including house trailers or campers as defined in Section 56‑3‑710 or a fire safety education trailer;

~~(6)~~(f) recreational vehicle, including tent campers, travel trailer, park model, park trailer, motor home, and fifth wheel; or

~~(7)~~(g) self‑propelled light construction equipment with compatible attachments limited to a maximum of one hundred sixty net engine horsepower.

(2) In the case of a lease, the total tax rate required by ~~law~~ this section applies on each payment until the total tax paid equals three hundred dollars. Nothing in this section prohibits a taxpayer from paying the total tax due at the time of execution of the lease, or with any payment under the lease. To qualify for the tax limitation provided by this section, a lease must be in writing and specifically state the term of, and remain in force for, a period in excess of ninety continuous days.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, after June 30, 2017, the maximum tax imposed pursuant to this chapter on the sale, lease, or registration of an item enumerated in item (1) only applies to items not subject to the fee pursuant to Section 56‑3‑627.

(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, after June 30, 2017, the maximum tax imposed pursuant to this chapter on the sale, lease, or registration of an item enumerated in item (1) is increased from three hundred dollars to five hundred dollars, mutatis mutandis. Further, the maximum tax of five hundred dollars must be increased by fifty dollars on July 1, 2018, and on July 1, 2019, until the maximum fee equals six hundred dollars. Notwithstanding Section 59‑21‑1010, or any other provision of law, any revenue resulting from the increase contained in this item must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund.

B. Section 12‑36‑2120 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 256 of 2016, is further amended by adding an appropriately numbered item to read:

“( ) any item subject to the fee set forth in Section 56‑3‑627.”

C. Section 12‑36‑1710(A) through (D) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) In addition to all other fees prescribed by law there is imposed an excise tax for the issuance of every certificate of title, or other proof of ownership, for every ~~motor vehicle, motorcycle,~~ boat, motor, or airplane, required to be registered, titled, or licensed. The tax is five percent of the fair market value of the ~~motor vehicle, motorcycle,~~ airplane, boat, and motor.

(B) Excluded from the tax are:

(1) ~~motor vehicles, motorcycles,~~ boats, motors, or airplanes:

(a) transferred to members of the immediate family;

(b) transferred to a legal heir, legatee, or distributee;

(c) transferred from an individual to a partnership upon formation of a partnership, or from a stockholder to a corporation upon formation of a corporation;

(d) transferred to a licensed motor vehicle or motorcycle dealer for the purpose of resale;

(e) transferred to a financial institution for the purpose of resale;

(f) transferred as a result of repossession to any other secured party, for the purpose of resale;

(2) the fair market value of a ~~motor vehicle, motorcycle,~~ boat, motor, or airplane, transferred to the seller or secured party in partial payment;

(3) gross proceeds of transfers of ~~motor vehicles, motorcycles, or~~ airplanes specifically exempted by Section 12‑36‑2120 from the sales or use tax;

(4) ~~motor vehicles, motorcycles,~~ boats, motors, or airplanes, where a sales or use tax has been paid on the transaction necessitating the transfer.

(C) ‘Fair market value’ means the total purchase price less any trade‑in, or the valuation shown in a national publication of used values adopted by the department, less any trade‑in.

(D) ‘Total purchase price’ means the price of a ~~motor vehicle, motorcycle,~~ boat, motor, or airplane agreed upon by the buyer and seller with an allowance for a trade‑in, if applicable.”

D. Section 12‑36‑2647 of the 1976 Code is repealed.

E. The Code Commissioner is directed to change or correct all references to the sales tax on vehicles and other such items to reflect the provisions of Section 56‑3‑627 as added by this act. References to the sales tax on vehicles and other such items in the 1976 Code or other provisions of law are considered to be and must be construed to mean appropriate references.

SECTION 8. A. Article 23, Chapter 37, Title 12 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Article 23

Motor Carriers

Section 12‑37‑2810. As used in this article, unless the context requires otherwise:

(A) ‘Motor carrier’ means a person who owns, controls, operates, manages, or leases a commercial motor vehicle, or bus for the transportation of property or persons in intrastate or interstate commerce except for scheduled intercity bus service and farm vehicles using FM tags as allowed by the Department of Motor Vehicles. A motor carrier is defined further as being a South Carolina‑based International Registration Plan registrant or owning or leasing real property within this State used directly in the transportation of freight or persons.

(B) ‘Commercial motor vehicle’ means a motor propelled vehicle used for the transportation of property on a public highway ~~with a gross vehicle weight of greater than twenty‑six thousand pounds~~, except for farm vehicles using FM tags as allowed by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

(C) ‘Large commercial motor vehicle’ means a commercial motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of greater than twenty‑six thousand pounds that is registered under the International Registration Plan or used on a highway for the transportation of property.

(D) ‘Small commercial motor vehicle’ means a commercial motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of less than or equal to twenty‑six thousand pounds that is registered under the International Registration Plan or used on a highway for the transportation of property.

~~(C)~~(E) ‘Highway’ means all public roads, highways, streets, and ways in this State, whether within a municipality or outside of a municipality.

~~(D)~~(F) ‘Person’ means any individual, corporation, firm, partnership, company or association, and includes a guardian, trustee, executor, administrator, receiver, conservator, or a person acting in a fiduciary capacity.

~~(E)~~(G) ‘Semitrailers’ means every vehicle with or without motive power, other than a pole trailer, designed for carrying property and for being drawn by a motor vehicle and constructed so that a part of its weight and of its load rests upon or is carried by another vehicle.

~~(F)~~(H) ‘Trailers’ means every vehicle with or without motive power, other than a pole trailer, designed for carrying property and for being drawn by a motor vehicle and constructed so that no part of its weight rests upon the towing vehicle.

~~(G)~~(I) ‘Bus’ means every motor vehicle designed for carrying more than sixteen passengers and used for the transportation of persons, for compensation, other than a taxicab or intercity bus.

(J) ‘South Carolina apportionment factor’ means the ratio of miles operated by a fleet of vehicles in South Carolina to the miles operated by the fleet of vehicles everywhere, which is used to apportion the registration fees of the fleet under the International Registration Plan.

Section 12‑37‑2815. The provisions contained in this article do not apply to small commercial motor vehicles that must be licensed, registered, and pay ad valorem taxes as otherwise provided by law.

Section 12‑37‑2820. (A) The Department of ~~Revenue~~ Motor Vehicles annually shall assess, equalize, and apportion the valuation of all large commercial motor vehicles and buses of motor carriers registered for use in this State under the International Registration Plan or otherwise pursuant to Section 56‑3‑190. The valuation must be based on fair market value for the motor vehicles and an assessment ratio of nine and one‑half percent as provided by Section 12‑43‑220(g). Fair market value is determined by depreciating the gross capitalized cost of each motor carrier’s large commercial motor vehicle~~,~~ or bus by an annual percentage depreciation allowance down to ten percent of the cost as follows:

(1) Year One ‑‑ .90

(2) Year Two ‑‑ .80

(3) Year Three ‑‑ .65

(4) Year Four ‑‑ .50

(5) Year Five ‑‑ .35

(6) Year Six ‑‑ .25

(7) Year Seven ‑‑ .20

(8) Year Eight ‑‑ .15

(9) Year Nine ‑‑ .10

(B) ‘Gross capitalized cost’, as used in this section, means the original cost upon acquisition for income tax purposes, not to include taxes, interest, or cab customizing.

Section 12‑37‑2830. The value of a motor carrier’s large commercial motor vehicles and buses subject to ~~property taxes~~ road use fees in this State must be determined ~~based on the ratio of total mileage operated within this State during the preceding calendar year to the total mileage of its fleet operated within and without this State during the same preceding calendar year~~ according to the South Carolina apportionment factor for the fleet of which the commercial vehicle is a part.

Section 12‑37‑2840. ~~(A)~~ ~~Motor carriers must file an annual property tax return with the Department of Revenue no later than June 30 for the preceding calendar year and remit one‑half of the tax due or the entire tax due as stated on the return. If the motor carrier fails to pay either one‑half of the tax due or the entire tax due as of June 30, the department must issue a proposed assessment for the entire tax to the motor carrier. The tax as shown in the proposed assessment must be paid in full by cashier’s check, money order, or cash within thirty days of the issuance of the proposed assessment, or the taxpayer may appeal the proposed assessment within thirty days using the procedures provided in subarticle 1, Article 5, Chapter 60 of this title.~~

~~(B)(1)~~ ~~If one‑half of the tax is remitted on or before June 30, the remaining one‑half of the tax due must be paid to the Department of Revenue on or before December 31 of that year. If the motor carrier fails to remit the remaining tax due pursuant to this section, the department shall issue a proposed assessment to the motor carrier.~~

~~(2)~~ ~~The tax shown in the proposed assessment must be paid in full by cashier’s check, money order, or cash or appealed within thirty days of the issuance of the proposed assessment. The taxpayer may appeal the proposed assessment using the procedures provided in subarticle 1, Article 5, Chapter 60 of this title.~~

~~(C)~~ ~~If a motor carrier fails to timely file the return as required by this section, the department shall issue a proposed assessment which assumes all mileage of the motor carrier’s fleet was driven within this State. A taxpayer may appeal this proposed assessment using the procedures provided in subarticle 1, Article 5, Chapter 60 of this title.~~

~~(D)~~ ~~A twenty‑five percent penalty must be added to the property tax due if the motor carrier fails to file a return or pay any tax due, including the one‑half of the tax due on June 30, as required by this section. The penalty must be applied the day after the date that the return was due to be filed or the tax was due to be paid. This penalty is instead of all other penalties and interest required by law, except those provided in Section 12‑54‑44.~~

~~(E)~~ ~~If the motor carrier fails to remit the tax due within thirty days of receipt of the proposed assessment and the taxpayer fails to appeal the proposed assessment as provided in subsection (B), the department shall assess the tax. Tax due pursuant to this section is subject to the collection procedures provided in Chapter 54, of this title, except that the penalty provisions of Section 12‑54‑43 do not apply~~ A motor carrier registering a large commercial motor vehicle or bus must pay the road use fee due on the vehicle at the time and in the manner the person pays the registration fees on the vehicle pursuant to Section 56‑3‑660. A person choosing to pay registration fees on a large commercial motor vehicle or bus in quarterly installments pursuant to Section 56‑3‑660 also must pay the road use fee on the vehicle in the same quarterly installments.

~~Section 12‑37‑2842.~~ ~~(A)~~ ~~The Department of Motor Vehicles, at the time of first registration by a motor carrier as defined in this article, shall notify the registrant of the Department of Revenue’s registration and filing requirements and supply the required registration forms.~~

~~(B)~~ ~~The motor carrier must register with the Department of Revenue within thirty days following the year in which the vehicle or bus was first registered for operation in South Carolina.~~

~~(C)~~ ~~A motor carrier must notify the Department of Revenue, on forms supplied by the department, of a motor vehicle or bus that is disposed of before December 31.~~

Section 12‑37‑2850. Beginning on January 1, 2019, the Department of ~~Revenue~~ Motor Vehicles shall assess annually the ~~taxes~~ road use fee due on large commercial motor vehicles and buses based on the value determined in Section 12‑37‑2820 and an average millage for all purposes statewide for the preceding calendar year and shall publish the average millage for the preceding year by ~~June 1~~ July first of each year. The Department of Revenue, in consultation with the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, shall calculate the millage to be used to calculate the road use fee by June first of each year for the following calendar year. The ~~taxes~~ road use fee assessed must be paid to the Department of ~~Revenue no later than December 31 of each year and may be made in two equal installments~~ Motor Vehicles, in addition to the registration fees required pursuant to Sections 56‑3‑660 and 56‑3‑670, at the time and in the manner that the registration fees on the vehicle are paid pursuant to Sections 56‑3‑660 and 56‑3‑670. Distribution of the ~~taxes~~ fees paid must be made by the ~~State Treasurer’s~~ Office of the State Treasurer based on the distribution formula ~~contained~~ provided in ~~Section 12‑37‑2870~~ Sections 12‑37‑2865 and 12‑37‑2870.

Section 12‑37‑2860. (A) In addition to the property tax exemptions allowed pursuant to Section 12‑37‑220, one hundred percent of the fair market value of semitrailers and trailers as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, and commonly used in combination with a large commercial motor vehicle, as defined pursuant to Section 12‑37‑2810, is exempt from property tax.

(B) Instead of ~~the~~ any property ~~taxes~~ tax and the registration requirements ~~contained~~ provided in Sections 56‑3‑110 and 56‑3‑700 on semitrailers and trailers of motor carriers as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, and commonly used in combination with a large commercial motor vehicle, a one‑time fee payable to the Department of Motor Vehicles in the amount of eighty‑seven dollars is ~~due~~ imposed on all semitrailers and trailers currently registered and subsequently on each semitrailer and trailer before being placed in service.

(C) The fee imposed pursuant to subsection (B) and the registration requirements of this article are in lieu of any local road use fee, registration fees, or any other vehicle related fee imposed by a political subdivision of this State on a trailer or semitrailer.

~~(B)~~(D) Twelve dollars of the one‑time fee must be distributed to the Department of ~~Revenue~~ Motor Vehicles and may be retained by the Department of ~~Revenue~~ Motor Vehicles and expended in budgeted operations to record and administer the fee. The remaining seventy‑five dollars of the fee must be distributed based on the distribution formula ~~contained~~ provided in ~~Section~~ Sections 12‑37‑2865 and 12‑37‑2870, and must occur by the fifteenth day of the month following the month in which the fees are collected.

~~(C)~~ ~~The fee required by this section is due on or before March 31, 1998, for the initial registration.~~

~~(D)~~(E) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall design a permanent tag for display on the exterior of the rear of the trailer or semitrailer in a conspicuous place.

(F) If the apportioned registration fees of a large commercial motor vehicle or bus and the road use fees for large commercial motor vehicles required under this chapter are equal to or exceed four hundred dollars, the fees may be remitted to the Department of Motor Vehicles quarterly provided that each installment is made online. A motor carrier who fails to make a quarterly payment on a timely basis may no longer make installment payments and must remit to the department the balance of the fees owed for any previous calendar year before the Department of Motor Vehicles will renew registration for the current calendar year. A motor carrier that opts out of installment payments must make full payment of fees at the time of registration.

Section 12‑37‑2865. Seventy‑five percent of the revenues from the road use fee assessed pursuant to Section 12‑37‑2850, and the one‑time fee assessed pursuant to Section 12‑37‑2860 must be distributed by the State Treasurer as provided in Section 12‑37‑2870. Distributions must be made by the last day of the next month succeeding the month in which the fee is paid. The remaining twenty‑five percent must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund to be used to finance expansion and improvements to existing mainline interstates.

Section 12‑37‑2870. The distribution of the fee revenues required to be distributed pursuant to Section 12‑37‑2865 for each county must be determined on the ratio of total federal and state highway miles within each county during the preceding calendar year to the total federal and state highway miles within all counties of this State during the same preceding calendar year. The county must distribute the revenue from the payment‑in‑lieu of taxes received pursuant to this section within thirty days of its receipt to every governmental entity levying a property tax in the manner set forth below. For each governmental entity levying a property tax, the entire assessed value of the taxable property within its boundaries and the county area must be multiplied by the millage rate imposed by the governmental entity. That figure constitutes the numerator for that governmental entity. The total of the numerators for all property tax levying entities within the county area constitutes the denominator. The numerator for each governmental entity must be divided by the denominator. The resulting percentage must be multiplied by the ~~payment‑in‑lieu of tax~~ fee revenue received pursuant to this section and that amount distributed to the general fund of the appropriate governmental entity. The distribution of taxes and fees paid must be made by the last day of the next month succeeding the month in which the taxes and fees were paid.

Section 12‑37‑2880. (A) In addition to the property tax exemptions allowed pursuant to Section 12‑37‑220, one hundred percent of the fair market value of all large commercial motor vehicles and buses registered for use in this State under the International Registration Plan or otherwise pursuant to Section 56‑3‑190, is exempt from property tax and is instead subject to the road use fee imposed pursuant to this article.

(B) The ~~ad valorem taxes authorized~~ road use fee imposed by this article ~~are~~ is in lieu of all ~~other~~ ad valorem taxes upon ~~the~~ large commercial motor vehicles or buses ~~of motor carriers~~, and any road use or other vehicle‑related fees imposed by a political subdivision of this State if registered for use in this State under the International Registration Plan. ~~The fee‑in‑lieu of property taxes and registration requirements authorized by this article are in lieu of all other ad valorem taxes upon trailers and semitrailers of motor carriers.~~

~~Section 12‑37‑2890.~~ ~~(A)~~ ~~Upon request by the Department of Revenue, and after the time period for all appeals of tax due is exhausted, the Department of Motor Vehicles shall suspend the driver’s license and vehicle registration of a person that fails to file or pay a motor carrier property tax on a vehicle, pursuant to this article. The request to suspend must be an electronic notification from the Department of Revenue to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Before notification is sent to the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Department of Revenue shall notify the delinquent taxpayer by certified letter of the pending suspension and of the steps necessary to prevent the suspension from being entered on the taxpayer’s driving and registration records. The department shall allow thirty days for payment of taxes before notifying the Department of Motor Vehicles to suspend the driver’s license and vehicle registration.~~

~~(B)~~ ~~Notwithstanding the provisions of Sections 56‑1‑460 and 56‑9‑500, a charge of driving under suspension when the suspension is solely for failure to file or pay a motor carrier property tax or the reinstatement fee required for the property tax does not require proof of financial responsibility. A person is not subject to a custodial arrest solely for being under suspension pursuant to this section. Upon conviction of a violation of this section, the taxpayer is subject to:~~

~~(1)~~ ~~for a first offense a fine not to exceed fifty dollars;~~

~~(2)~~ ~~for a second offense a fine not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars; and~~

~~(3)~~ ~~for a third or subsequent offense under this section, the penalty is a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars or imprisonment not to exceed thirty days, or both.~~

~~(C)~~ ~~Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (A) and (B) of this section or the provisions of Section 56‑1‑460, a charge of driving under suspension issued solely as a result of this section must be dismissed if the taxpayer provides proof on the taxpayer’s court date that the personal property taxes on the vehicle which resulted in the charge being issued have been paid.~~

~~(D)~~ ~~Before the reinstatement of a driver’s license or vehicle registration suspended due to a violation of this section, a fee of fifty dollars must be paid to the Department of Motor Vehicles. The Department of Motor Vehicles may retain revenues generated by payment of the reinstatement fees pursuant to this section for use in defraying costs associated with suspension and reinstatement actions pursuant to this section Fees collected in excess of actual departmental direct costs related to suspension and reinstatement actions pursuant to this section must be deposited to the credit of the general fund of the State at the end of each fiscal year.~~”

B. Section 56‑3‑376 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 56‑3‑376. (A) All vehicles except those vehicles designated in Section 56‑3‑780 are designated as distinct classifications and must be assigned an annual registration period as follows:

(1) Classification (1). Vehicles for which the biennial registration fee is one‑hundred sixty dollars or more. The Department of Motor Vehicles may register and license a vehicle for which the biennial registration fee is one‑hundred sixty dollars or more or for a semiannual or one‑half year upon application to the department by the owner and the payment of one‑fourth of the specified biennial fee. Biennial registrations and licenses expire at midnight on the last day of the twenty‑fourth month for the period for which they were issued. Semiannual or half‑year registrations and licenses expire at midnight of the sixth month for the period for which they were issued and no person shall drive, move, or operate a vehicle upon a highway after the expiration of the registration and license until the vehicle is registered and licensed for the then current period. Trucks, truck tractors, or road tractors with an empty or unloaded weight of over five thousand pounds or less, or gross vehicle weight of eight thousand pounds or less also must be placed in this classification but may not be registered for less than a full biennial period.

(2) Classification (2). Other vehicles. All other vehicles except those vehicles described in classification (1) and (3) of this section are assigned a staggered biennial registration which expires on the last day of the month for the period for which they were issued.

(3) Classification (3). Large commercial motor vehicles and buses registered by motor carriers, as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, are assigned a staggered annual registration which expires on the last day of the month for the period for which they were issued.

(B) Notwithstanding the registration periods provided in this section, upon appropriate notice, the department may revise the established renewal dates to allow renewals to be assigned an expiration date pursuant to a staggered monthly basis.”

C. Section 56‑3‑120(5) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(5) a trailer or semitrailer ~~of a motor carrier~~ commonly used in combination with a large commercial motor vehicle, as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, for which trailer or semitrailer the ~~fee‑in‑lieu of taxes and registration requirements has been paid~~ fee imposed pursuant to Section 12‑37‑2860 is paid and applicable registration requirements provided pursuant to Article 23, Chapter 37, Title 12, are met, and a distinctive permanent plate has been issued pursuant to Section 12‑37‑2860.”

D. Section 56‑3‑610 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 56‑3‑610. (A) Except as provided in subsection (B), the owner of every motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, pole trailer, and special mobile equipment vehicle required to be registered and licensed under this chapter shall pay to the Department of Motor Vehicles at the time of registering and licensing the vehicle and biennially after that time registration and license fees as set forth in this article.

(B) A large commercial motor vehicle or bus on which is imposed the road use fee provided pursuant to Article 23, Chapter 37, Title 12 is required to be registered and licensed annually pursuant to this chapter and the scheduled fees adjusted as provided pursuant to Section 56‑3‑660(E).”

E. Section 56‑3‑660(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 56‑3‑660. (A) The determination of gross vehicle weight to register and license self‑propelled property carrying vehicles is the empty weight of the vehicle or combination of vehicles and the heaviest load to be transported by the vehicle or combination of vehicles as declared by the registered owner. All determinations of weight must be made in units of one thousand pounds or major fraction of one thousand pounds. The declared gross vehicle weight applies to all self‑propelled property carrying vehicles operating in tandem with trailers or semitrailers except that the gross weight of a trailer or semitrailer is not required to be included when the operation is to be in tandem with a self‑propelled property carrying vehicle licensed for six thousand pounds or less gross weight, and the gross vehicle weight of the combination does not exceed nine thousand pounds. The Department of Motor Vehicles may register and license a ~~vehicle of this classification~~ small commercial motor vehicle, as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, for which the biennial registration and license fee is one‑hundred and sixty dollars or more for an annual or one‑year period beginning on April first and ending on March thirty‑first of the next year upon application to the department by the owner and the payment of one‑half the specified biennial fee or for a semiannual or one‑half year beginning on April first and ending on September thirtieth of the same year upon application to the department by the owner and the payment of the appropriate fees. The registration and license fee for small commercial motor vehicles ~~in this classification~~ which are registered for the remaining twenty‑four months or less of the twenty‑four month biennial period or for the eleven months or less of the twelve‑month year ending on March thirty‑first or the remaining five months or less for the one‑half period ending on September thirtieth is the proportionate part of the specified biennial fee for the remainder of the twenty‑four month period or year or one‑half year based on one twenty‑fourth of the specified twenty‑four‑month fee for each month or part of a month remaining in the biennial registration period or license year or one‑half year. ~~No~~ An proportionate fee may not be reduced lower than ten dollars. A person making application for a registration and license for a motor vehicle of this classification shall declare the true unloaded or empty weight of the vehicle.”

F. Section 56‑3‑660 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding an appropriately lettered subsection to read:

“( ) Fees for licensing and registration, and fees imposed pursuant to Article 23, Chapter 37, Title 12, may be credited or prorated as prescribed by the Department of Motor Vehicles.”

G. Section 56‑3‑660(E) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(E) The department may register ~~an apportionable~~ a large commercial motor vehicle, as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, for the payment of one‑half of this State’s portion of the license and road fee for a vehicle whose portion of the license and road fee owed to this State exceeds ~~eight~~ four hundred dollars. The department may require any information necessary to complete the transaction.”

H. Section 58‑23‑620 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 58‑23‑620. (A) ~~No city, town,~~ A municipality or county in this State ~~shall~~ may not impose a license fee or license tax upon a holder of a certificate A or a certificate B, and ~~no city, town,~~ a municipality or county ~~shall~~ may not impose a license fee or license tax on the holder of a certificate E or a certificate F, Certificate of Compliance, or a common or contract motor carrier of property, except the ~~city or town~~ municipality of ~~such~~ the carrier’s residence or the location of ~~his~~ the carrier’s principal place of business. However, the fee required of a holder of a certificate C is in addition to any license tax or license fee charged by a municipality.

(B) If a municipality or county imposes a license fee or license tax pursuant to subsection (A), the fee or tax in the case of any certificate holder or common or contract motor carrier of property which operates its vehicles both within and without this State, must be apportioned in the ratio that the miles traveled by the vehicles operated by the certificate holder in this State bears to miles traveled by those vehicles in all states.”

I. Article 21, Chapter 37, Title 12 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 12‑37‑2600. Motor carriers, as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, are exempt from ad valorem taxes imposed pursuant to this chapter on large commercial motor vehicles and buses.”

J. Section 12‑37‑2610 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 87 of 2015, is further amended to read:

“Section 12‑37‑2610. The tax year for licensed motor vehicles begins with the last day of the month in which a registration required by Section 56‑3‑110 is issued and ends on the last day of the month in which the registration expires or is due to expire. ~~No~~ A registration may not be issued for motor vehicles until the ad valorem tax is paid for the year for which the registration is to be issued. ~~Motor vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan may pay ad valorem property taxes on a semiannual basis~~ Large commercial motor vehicles and buses, as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, must pay road use fees pursuant to Article 23, Chapter 37, Title 12 in lieu of ad valorem property taxes. The provisions of this section do not apply to the transfer of motor vehicle registrations as specified in Section 12‑37‑2675 or to sales of motor vehicles by a licensed motor vehicle dealer. Notice of the sales must be furnished to the Department of Motor Vehicles by the dealer, along with other documents necessary for the registration and licensing of the vehicle concerned. The notice must be received by the Department of Motor Vehicles as a prerequisite to the registration and licensing of the vehicle and must include the name and address of the purchaser, the vehicle identification number, and the year and model of the vehicle. The notice must be an original and one copy, and the copy must be provided by the department to the auditor of the county in which the vehicle is taxable. All ad valorem taxes on a vehicle are due and payable one hundred twenty days from the date of purchase. The notice and the time in which to pay the tax applies to motor vehicles that are serviced and delivered by a licensed motor vehicle dealer for the benefit of an out‑of‑state dealer.”

K. The first paragraph of Section 12‑37‑2650 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“The auditor shall prepare a tax notice of all vehicles owned by the same person and licensed at the same time for each tax year within the two‑year licensing period. A notice must describe the motor vehicle by name, model, and identification number. The notice must set forth the assessed value of the vehicle, the millage, the taxes due on each vehicle, and the license period or tax year. The notice must be delivered to the county treasurer who must collect or receive payment of the taxes. One copy of the notice must be in the form of a bill or statement for the taxes due on the motor vehicle and, when practical, the treasurer shall mail that copy to the owner or person having control of the vehicle. When the tax and all other charges included on the tax bill have been paid, the treasurer shall issue the taxpayer a paid receipt. The receipt or a copy may be delivered by the taxpayer to the Department of Motor Vehicles with the application for the motor vehicle registration. A record of the payment of the tax must be retained by the treasurer. The auditor shall maintain a separate duplicate for motor vehicles. ~~No~~ A registration may not be issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles unless the application is accompanied by the receipt, a copy of the notification required by Section 12‑37‑2610 or notice from the county treasurer, by other means satisfactory to the Department of Motor Vehicles, of payment of the tax. ~~Motor vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan may pay ad valorem property taxes on a semiannual basis, and a proportional receipt must be issued by the treasurer subject to penalties in Section 12‑37‑2730.~~ Large commercial motor vehicles and buses, as defined in Section 12‑37‑2810, must pay road use fees pursuant to Article 23, Chapter 37, Title 12 in lieu of ad valorem property taxes. The treasurer, tax collector, or other official charged with the collection of ad valorem property taxes in each county may delegate the collection of motor vehicle taxes to banks or banking institutions, if each institution assigns, hypothecates, or pledges to the county, as security for the collection, federal funds or federal, state, or municipal securities in an amount adequate to prevent any loss to the county from any cause. Each institution shall remit the taxes collected daily to the county official charged with the collections. The receipt given to the taxpayer, in addition to the information required in this section and by Section 12‑45‑70, must contain the name and office of the treasurer or tax collector of the county and must also show the name of the banking institution to which payment was made.”

L. (1) Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary within this SECTION, a person who registers a vehicle for use in this State pursuant to Article 23, Chapter 37, Title 12, as amended by this act, must register his vehicle during calendar year 2019 and is required to pay the road fees calculated based on the fair market value of the vehicle as specified in Sections 12‑37‑2820 and 12‑37‑2850 at the time the vehicle’s registration fees are paid.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions in Section 12‑37‑2865(B) and (C), as contained in this SECTION, to the contrary, during calendar year 2019 the first four hundred thousand dollars of fee revenue collected pursuant to Section 12‑37‑2865 must be retained by the Department of Motor Vehicles to defray programming costs.

(3) The initial millage required by Section 12‑37‑2850 must be calculated on or before June 1, 2018.

M. This SECTION takes effect January 1, 2019, except that the Department of Revenue, in consultation with the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, shall calculate the millage to be used to calculate the road use fee provided in Section 12‑37‑2850 by July 1, 2018.

SECTION 9. Section 56‑1‑140 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 275 of 2016, is further amended to read:

“Section 56‑1‑140. (A) Upon payment of a fee of ~~twelve~~ twenty‑five dollars ~~and fifty cents~~ for a license that is valid for five years, or ~~twenty‑five~~ forty dollars for a license that is valid for ~~ten~~ eight years, the Department of Motor Vehicles shall issue to every qualified applicant a driver’s license as applied for by law. The license must bear on it a distinguishing number assigned to the licensee, the full name, date of birth, residence address, a brief description and laminated colored photograph of the licensee, and a facsimile of the signature of the licensee, or a space upon which the licensee shall write his usual signature with pen and ink immediately upon receipt of the license. ~~No~~ A license is not valid until it has been ~~so~~ signed by the licensee. The license authorizes the licensee to operate only those classifications of vehicles as indicated on the license.

(B) An applicant for a new, renewed, or replacement South Carolina driver’s license may apply to the Department of Motor Vehicles to obtain a veteran designation on the front of his driver’s license by providing:

(1) a United States Department of Defense discharge certificate, also known as a DD Form 214, that shows a characterization of service, or discharge status of ‘honorable’ or ‘general under honorable conditions’ and establishes the person’s qualifying military service in the United States Armed Forces; and

(2) payment of a one dollar fee that must be ~~retained~~ collected by the department and placed by the Comptroller General into the State Highway Fund as established by Section 57‑11‑20, to be distributed as provided in Section 11‑43‑167.

The Department of Motor Vehicles may determine the appropriate form of the veteran designation on the driver’s license authorized pursuant to this section.

(C) ~~The fees collected pursuant to this section must be credited to the Department of Transportation State Non‑Federal Aid Highway Fund.~~ All of the fees collected pursuant to this section must be credited to the Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund.”

SECTION 10. The first paragraph in Section 12‑28‑2355(C), before the first colon, is amended to read:

“(C) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, ~~of~~ the fees collected pursuant to subsection (A) ~~of this section, ten percent must be transmitted by the Department of Revenue to the Department of Agriculture beginning upon the effective date of this act for use as provided in Section 39‑41‑70 and the remainder of the fees~~ must be credited to the Department of Transportation State Non‑Federal Aid Highway Fund as provided in the following schedule:”

SECTION 11. Section 12‑28‑2740 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding an appropriately numbered subsection at the end to read:

“( ) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (A), on July 1, 2018, and each July first thereafter until after July 1, 2021, the amount of proceeds of the user fee on gasoline only as levied for in this chapter that must be deposited with the State Treasurer and expended for the purposes of this section must be increased by .3325 cents a gallon, until such time as the total amount equals three and ninety‑nine one‑hundredths cents a gallon. Any increase in proceeds resulting from the provisions of this subsection must be used exclusively for the repairs, maintenance, and improvements to the state highway secondary system.”

SECTION 12. Section 12-28-530 of the 1976 Code is repealed.

SECTION 13. Section 12‑28‑2740 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(H)(1) For purposes of this subsection, ‘donor county’ means a county that contributes to the ‘C’ fund an amount in excess of what it receives under the allocation formula as stated in subsection (A). In addition to the allocation to the counties pursuant to subsection (A), the Department of Transportation annually shall transfer ~~from the state highway fund~~ to the donor counties an amount equal to ~~nine and one‑half~~ seventeen million dollars in the ratio of the individual donor county’s contribution in excess of ‘C’ fund revenue allocated to the county under subsection (A) to the total excess contributions of all donor counties.

(2) A county is eligible for an additional allocation from the Department of Transportation if the county contributed to the ‘C’ fund an amount in excess of what it receives under the allocation formula as stated in subsection (A) plus what it receives under item (1). The Department of Transportation annually shall transfer to the eligible counties an amount up to three and one-half million dollars in the ratio of the individual eligible county’s contribution to the ‘C’ fund in excess of the eligible county’s total allocations under subsection (A) and item (1) to the total excess contributions of all eligible counties remaining after all allocations under subsection (A) and item (1) have been made. Under no circumstances can an allocation under this item result in an eligible county receiving total allocations in excess of what the county contributed to the ‘C’ fund.”

SECTION 14. Article 3, Chapter 1, Title 57 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 57-1-380. The Department shall prepare a Transportation Asset Management Plan which includes objectives and performance measures for the preservation and improvement of the State Highway System. In addition, the Transportation Asset Management Plan shall include objectives, performance measures and innovative approaches to address high risk rural roads that are functionally classified as a rural Primary or Federal Aid Secondary roads. High risk rural roads shall include roads in which the accidents resulting in fatalities and incapacitating injuries exceeds the statewide average, including roadway departures, for those functional classes of roadway. The Transportation Asset Management Plan shall be approved by the Commission and is to establish fiscally constrained performance goals, including $50 million for high risk rural roads, for transportation infrastructure assets such as pavements and bridges. The Department shall provide an annual update on achieving the Transportation Asset Management Plan performance goals to the General Assembly as well as publishing the results for the public to view.”

SECTION 15. Section 12‑28‑2740 of the 1976 Code is further amended by adding an appropriately lettered subsection at the end to read:

“( ) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (A), on July 1, 2018 and each July first thereafter until after July 1, 2021, the amount of proceeds of the user fee on gasoline only as levied for in this chapter that must be deposited with the State Treasurer and expended for the purposes of this section must be increased by .3325 cents a gallon, until such time as the total amount equals three and ninety‑nine one‑hundredths cents a gallon. Any increase in proceeds resulting from the provisions of this subsection must be used exclusively for repairs, maintenance, and improvements to the state highway system.”

SECTION 16. Section11-43-167(B)(2) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(2) The Department of Transportation shall reduce the allocation to the state-funded resurfacing program required in item (1) in proportion to the amounts transferred to the South Carolina Transportation Infrastructure Bank pursuant to subsection (C) and in proportion to the amounts required by the Department of Transportation to fund repairs, maintenance, and improvements to the existing transportation system.”

SECTION 17. A. Article 31, Chapter 28, Title 12 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“ARTICLE 31

Motor Fuel Tax Credit

Section 12‑28‑3110. (A)(1) A taxpayer is allowed a refundable credit against the motor fuel user fees imposed pursuant to this chapter for preventative maintenance on a private passenger motor vehicle as defined in Section 56-3-630, including motorcycles, registered in this State during the appropriate year, subject to other limitations contained in this section. The total amount claimed for a vehicle may not exceed one hundred fifty percent of the resident’s actual motor fuel user fee increase incurred for that motor vehicle as a result of increases in the motor fuel user fee pursuant to Section 12‑28‑310(D). To claim the credit contained in this section, a taxpayer shall provide an itemized list of the vehicle maintenance and motor fuel expenditures incurred within this State during the immediately preceding year in a manner, on a form prescribed by the Department of Revenue, with a South Carolina income tax return, and with necessary documentation to include proof of purchases. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a taxpayer may claim the credit for up to five private passenger motor vehicles, with the credit being calculated separately for each vehicle. For the purposes of this section, ‘preventative maintenance’ includes costs incurred within this State for new tires, oil changes, regular vehicle maintenance, and the like. In addition, ‘motor fuel expenditures’ are purchases of motor fuel within this State to which the motor fuel user fee imposed pursuant to Section 12-28-310(D) applies.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section:

(a) For tax year 2018, the credit allowed by this section may not exceed one hundred sixty million dollars.

(b) For tax year 2019, the credit allowed by this section may not exceed two hundred forty million dollars.

(c) For tax year 2020, the credit allowed by this section may not exceed three hundred twenty million dollars.

(d) For tax year 2021, the credit allowed by this section may not exceed three hundred ninety million dollars.

(e) For all tax years after 2021, the credit allowed by this section may not exceed four hundred sixty‑five million dollars.

On or before September 30, 2018 and by September thirtieth of each year thereafter, the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office shall estimate the number of taxpayers expected to claim the credit for the current tax year and the total amount expected to be claimed. In the event that the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office estimates that the total amount of credits claimed will exceed the maximum amount of aggregate credit allowed pursuant to this item, the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office shall certify to the Department of Revenue a pro rata adjustment to the credit otherwise provided.

(B)(1) In order to offset the credit allowed by the section, on or before January 31, 2019 and by January thirty-first of each year thereafter, the Department of Transportation shall transfer to the Department of Revenue an amount equal to the total amount of credits estimated by the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office to be claimed for the applicable tax year, not to exceed one hundred fifty million dollars. If the credit claimed by all taxpayers in a tax year is less than one hundred fifty million dollars, then the excess shall revert back from the Department of Revenue to the Department of Transportation as soon as practicable within the same year that the transfer occurred.

(2) If the transferred funds pursuant to item (B)(1) are not sufficient to completely offset the credit and if balances in the Capital Reserve Fund are available for appropriation by the General Assembly, then it is the intent of the General Assembly to offset the remaining credit amount from the Capital Reserve Fund as the first order of priority in appropriation from the Capital Reserve Fund.”

B. This SECTION takes effect upon approval by the Governor and applies to tax years after tax year 2017.

SECTION 18. A. Article 25, Chapter 6, Title 12 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 12‑6‑3632. There is allowed as a nonrefundable credit against the tax imposed pursuant to Section 12‑6‑510 on a full‑year resident individual taxpayer an amount equal to two hundred and fifty percent of the federal earned income tax credit (EITC) allowed the taxpayer pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 32.”

B. Notwithstanding Section 12‑6‑3632 as added by this SECTION, the percentage of the federal earned income tax credit, for which the credit allowed by Section 12‑6‑3632 is based, must be phased‑in in six equal installments of forty-one and sixty seven hundredths of a percent each tax year until it is fully phased‑in in tax year 2023, with the first forty-one and sixty seven hundredths of a percent applying in tax year 2018.

C. This SECTION takes effect upon approval by the Governor and applies to tax years beginning after 2017.

SECTION 19. A. Section 12‑6‑3330(B)(1) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(1) ~~thirty~~ fifty thousand dollars; or”

B. Notwithstanding the increased multiplier of fifty thousand dollars in Section 12‑6‑3330(B)(1) as amended in this SECTION, the increase must be phased‑in in six equal installments of three thousand three hundred thirty three dollars each tax year until it is fully phased‑in in tax year 2023, with the first increase occurring in tax year 2018.

C. This SECTION takes effect upon approval by the Governor and applies to tax years beginning after 2017.

SECTION 20. A. Section 12‑6‑3385(A)(1) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 12‑6‑3385. (A)(1)(a) A student is allowed a refundable individual income tax credit equal to ~~twenty‑five~~ fifty percent, not to exceed ~~eight hundred fifty~~ one thousand five hundred dollars in the case of both four‑year institutions and ~~twenty‑five percent, not to exceed three hundred fifty dollars in the case of~~ two‑year institutions, for tuition paid an institution of higher learning or a designated institution as provided in this section, during a taxable year. The amount of the tax credit claimed up to the limits authorized in this section for any taxable year may not exceed the amount of tuition paid during that taxable year.

(b) The maximum amount of credits allowed by this section for all taxpayers may not exceed forty million dollars in tax year 2018. For all tax years after 2018, the maximum amount of credits for all taxpayers may not exceed the maximum amount in tax year 2018, plus a cumulative amount equal to the percentage increase in the Higher Education Price Index, not to exceed more than three percent a year. If the total amount of credits claimed in a tax year exceeds the maximum amount, then the amount of each credit must be reduced proportionately.

(c) In addition to the credit allowed pursuant to subitem (a), a student, including a student who is a dependent of a taxpayer as provided in item (3), who claims the earned income tax credit (EITC) allowed, pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 32, and attends a two‑year or four-year institution may add an additional twenty‑five percent to the percentage allowed in subitem (a), subject to the maximum amount set forth in subitem (b).

(d) In addition to the credit allowed pursuant to subitems (a) and (c), an eligible student attending a four‑year institution who is at least a sophomore and who is majoring in a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) related discipline, as those terms are defined by the Commission on Higher Education pursuant to Section 59‑149‑15, may claim a credit of up to one thousand two hundred fifty dollars, not to exceed the cost of tuition paid and subject to the maximum amount set forth in subitem (b).

(e) In addition to the credit allowed pursuant to subitems (a) and (c), an eligible student attending a two‑year institution who has earned enough credits to be considered a second year student and who is pursuing an associate degree in a STEM-related discipline, as those terms are defined by the Commission on Higher Education pursuant to Section 59‑149‑15, may claim an additional credit of up to one thousand two hundred fifty dollars, not to exceed the cost of tuition paid and subject to the maximum amount set forth in subitem (b).

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office annually shall estimate a maximum credit that may be permitted under this section for a taxable year based on the number of taxpayers expected to claim the credit and the expected amount claimed. The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office shall certify the maximum credit to the Department of Revenue, and for the applicable taxable year, the maximum credit amount must not exceed the lesser of the certified estimate or the maximum amount set forth in subitem (a). If the certified estimate exceeds the maximum amount set forth in subitem (b), then the credits set forth in subitems (a), (c), (d), and (e) each must be reduced by a pro-rata amount that the certified estimate exceeds the maximum set forth in subitem (b).

(g) The Commission on Higher Education, the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, and each public institution of higher learning, as defined in Section 59-103-5, must develop a plan to notify each student of the tax credit allowed by this section and shall promote resources that may be available on campus, or in the community, that would assist students in applying for the tax credit as applicable.”

B. This SECTION takes effect upon approval by the Governor and applies to tax years beginning after 2017.

SECTION 21. A. Section 12‑37‑220(B) of the 1976 Code is amended by adding an item at the end to read:

“(52)(a) nineteen and five one‑hundredths percent of the property tax value of manufacturing property assessed for property tax purposes pursuant to Section 12‑43‑220(a)(1). For purposes of this item, if the exemption is applied to real property, then it must be applied to the property tax value as it may be adjusted downward to reflect the limit imposed pursuant to Section 6, Article X of the South Carolina Constitution, 1895;

(b) nine and one‑half percent of the property tax value of business personal property required to be reported and returned annually to the Department of Revenue or county auditors assessed for property tax purposes pursuant to Section 12‑43‑220(f);

(i) The revenue loss resulting from the exemption allowed by this item must be reimbursed and allocated to the political subdivisions of this State, including school districts, in the same manner as the Trust Fund for Tax Relief, not to exceed eighty-five million dollars per year. In calculating estimated state individual and corporate income tax revenues for a fiscal year, the Board of Economic Advisors shall deduct amounts sufficient to account for the reimbursement required by this item.

(ii) Notwithstanding the exemption allowed by this item, in any year in which reimbursements are projected by the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office to exceed the reimbursement cap in sub-item (i), the exemption amounts shall be proportionally reduced so as not to exceed the reimbursement cap.

(iii) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, property exempted from property taxes in the manner provided in this item is considered taxable property for purposes of bonded indebtedness pursuant to Section 15, Article X of the Constitution of this State.”

B. Notwithstanding the exemption amount allowed pursuant to item (52)(a) added pursuant to subsection A of this SECTION, the percentage exemption amount is phased in in two equal and cumulative percentage installments, pursuant to subsection (B), applicable for property tax years beginning after 2018.

C. This SECTION takes effect upon approval by the Governor and first applies to property tax years beginning after 2018.

SECTION 22. Section 57‑1‑460 of the 1976 Code, relating to the Department of Transportation Secretary’s evaluation and approval of routine operation, maintenance, and emergency repairs, is repealed.

SECTION 23. Section 57‑1‑470 of the 1976 Code, relating to the Department of Transportation Commission’s review of routine maintenance and emergency repair requests approved by the Secretary, is repealed.

SECTION 24. Section 57‑1‑310(A) and (B) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 57-1-310. (A) The congressional districts of this State are constituted and created Department of Transportation Districts of the State, designated by numbers corresponding to the numbers of the respective congressional districts. The Commission of the Department of Transportation shall be composed of one member from each transportation district and ~~one member~~ two members from the State at large, all appointed by the Governor, upon the advice and consent of the Senate, subject to the provisions of Section 57‑1‑325. In making appointments to the commission, the Governor shall take into account race, gender, and other demographic factors, such as residence in rural or urban areas, so as to represent, to the greatest extent possible, all segments of the population of the State; however, consideration of these factors in making an appointment in no way creates a cause of action or basis for an employee grievance for a person appointed or for a person who fails to be appointed. The members of the commission shall represent the transportation needs of the State as a whole and may not subordinate the needs of the State to those of any particular area of the State.

~~(B)~~ ~~The at‑large appointment made by the Governor must be transmitted to the Joint Transportation Review Committee.~~”

SECTION 25. Section 57‑1‑350 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 57‑1‑350. (A) The commission may adopt an official seal for use on official documents of the department.

(B) The commission shall elect a chairman and adopt its own rules and procedures and may select such additional officers to serve such terms as the commission may designate.

(C) Commissioners must be reimbursed for official expenses as provided by law for members of state boards and commissions as established in the annual general appropriations act.

(D) All commission members are eligible to vote on all matters that come before the commission.

(E) The commission shall hold a minimum of six regular meetings annually, and other meetings may be called by the chair upon giving at least one week’s notice to all members and the public. Emergency meetings may be held with twenty‑four hours’ notice. Meeting materials for the regularly scheduled meetings shall be published at least twenty‑four hours in advance of the meeting.

(F) The commission or a member thereof may not enter into the day‑to‑day operations of the department, except in an oversight role with the secretary, and is specifically prohibited from taking part in:

(1) the awarding of contracts;

(2) the selection of a consultant or contractor or the prequalification of any individual consultant or contractor;

(3) the selection of a route for a specific project;

(4) the specific location of a transportation facility;

(5) the acquisition of rights‑of‑way or other properties necessary for a specific project or program; and

(6) the granting, denial, suspension, or revocation of any permit issued by the department.

(G) A member of the commission may not have any interest, direct or indirect, in any contract, franchise, privilege, or other benefit granted or awarded by the department during the term of his appointment and for one year after the termination of the appointment.”

SECTION 26. Section 57‑1‑360(B) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(B)(1) The chief internal auditor must be a Certified Public Accountant and possess any other experience the State Auditor may require. The chief internal auditor must establish, implement, and maintain the exclusive internal audit function of all departmental activities. The State Auditor shall set the salary for the chief internal auditor as allowed by statute or applicable law.

(2) The audits performed by the chief internal auditor must comply with recognized governmental auditing standards. The department and any entity contracting with the department must fully cooperate with the chief internal auditor in the discharge of his duties and responsibilities and must timely produce all books, papers, correspondence, memoranda, and other records considered necessary in connection with an internal audit. All final audit reports must be submitted to the commission and the Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, the Chairman of the House of Representatives Education and Public Works Committee, and the Chairman of the House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee before being made public. All final audit reports shall be published on the department’s and the State Auditor’s websites.

(3) The State Auditor is vested with the exclusive management and control of the chief internal auditor.”

SECTION 27. Section 57‑1‑430 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 57‑1‑430. (A) The secretary is charged with the affirmative duty to carry out the policies of the commission, to administer the day‑to‑day affairs of the department, to direct the implementation of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and the Statewide Mass Transit Plan, and to ensure the timely completion of all projects undertaken by the department, and routine operation and maintenance requests, and emergency repairs. He must represent the department in its dealings with other state agencies, local governments, special districts, and the federal government. The secretary must prepare an annual budget for the department that must be approved by the commission before becoming effective.

(B) For each division, the secretary may employ such personnel and prescribe their duties, powers, and functions as he considers necessary and as may be authorized by statute and for which funds have been authorized in the annual general appropriations act.

(C) The secretary shall prepare and publish on the department’s website an annual report outlining the department’s annual expenditures. The report must include a statewide summary and a detailed expenditure report for each county.

(D) The secretary shall prepare and publish on the department’s website an annual report that includes a list of all companies doing business with the department and the amount spent on these contracts.”

SECTION 28. Section 57-1-330(B) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(B) The at‑large commission member may be appointed from any county in the State unless another commission member is serving from that county. Failure by the at‑large commission member to maintain residence in the State shall result in a forfeiture of his office.

Commission members may be removed from office at the discretion of the Governor ~~subject to the prior approval of the appropriate legislative delegation~~.”

SECTION 29. The General Assembly finds that all the provisions contained in this act relate to one subject as required by Section 17, Article III of the South Carolina Constitution in that each provision relates directly to or in conjunction with other sections relating to the subject of the effects of inadequate infrastructure financing and oversight.

The General Assembly further finds that a common purpose or relationship exists among the sections, representing a potential plurality but not disunity of topics, notwithstanding that reasonable minds might differ in identifying more than one topic contained in the act.

SECTION 30. The repeal or amendment by this act of any law, whether temporary or permanent or civil or criminal, does not affect pending actions, rights, duties, or liabilities founded thereon, or alter, discharge, release or extinguish any penalty, forfeiture, or liability incurred under the repealed or amended law, unless the repealed or amended provision shall so expressly provide. After the effective date of this act, all laws repealed or amended by this act must be taken and treated as remaining in full force and effect for the purpose of sustaining any pending or vested right, civil action, special proceeding, criminal prosecution, or appeal existing as of the effective date of this act, and for the enforcement of rights, duties, penalties, forfeitures, and liabilities as they stood under the repealed or amended laws.

SECTION 31. If any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this act is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such holding shall not affect the constitutionality or validity of the remaining portions of this act, the General Assembly hereby declaring that it would have passed this act, and each and every section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, and word thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more other sections, subsections, paragraphs, subparagraphs, sentences, clauses, phrases, or words hereof may be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise ineffective.

SECTION 32. Except where specified otherwise, this act takes effect July 1, 2017.

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