

House Bill No. 71

An act relating to motor vehicle speed competitions; amending s. 316.191, F.S.; defining the term “conviction”; specifying that the section applies to motor vehicles; revising penalties for violation of prohibitions against described motor vehicle speed competitions; providing for impoundment of vehicles used in violation of motor vehicle speed competition provisions; providing for application of the Florida Contraband Forfeiture Act; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 316.191, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

316.191 Racing on highways.—

(1) As used in this section, the term:

(a) “Conviction” means a determination of guilt that is the result of a plea or trial, regardless of whether adjudication is withheld.

~~(b)~~(a) “Drag race” means is defined as the operation of two or more motor vehicles from a point side by side at accelerating speeds in a competitive attempt to outdistance each other, or the operation of one or more motor vehicles over a common selected course, from the same point to the same point, for the purpose of comparing the relative speeds or power of acceleration of such motor vehicle or motor vehicles within a certain distance or time limit.

~~(c)~~(b) “Racing” means is defined as the use of one or more motor vehicles in an attempt to outgain or, outdistance another motor vehicle, to or prevent another motor vehicle from passing, to arrive at a given destination ahead of another motor vehicle or motor vehicles, or to test the physical stamina or endurance of drivers over long-distance driving routes.

(2)(a) A person may not:

1. Drive any motor vehicle, including any motorcycle, in any race, speed competition or contest, drag race or acceleration contest, test of physical endurance, or exhibition of speed or acceleration, or for the purpose of making a speed record on any highway, roadway, or parking lot, and a person may not

2. In any manner participate in, coordinate, facilitate, or collect moneys at any location for any such race, competition, contest, test, or exhibition;

3. Knowingly ride as a passenger in any such race, competition, contest, test, or exhibition; or

4. Purposefully cause the movement of traffic to slow or stop for, any such race, competition, contest, test, or exhibition.

Any person who violates any provision of this paragraph commits a misdemeanor of the ~~first second~~ degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083. Any person who violates any provision of this paragraph shall pay a fine of not less than \$500 ~~\$250~~ and not more than \$1,000 ~~\$500~~, and the department shall revoke the driver license of a person so convicted for 1 year. A hearing may be requested pursuant to s. 322.271.

(b) Any person who violates paragraph (a) within 5 years after the date of a prior violation that resulted in a conviction for a violation of this subsection commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083, and shall pay a fine of not less than \$500 and not more than \$1,000. The department shall also revoke the driver license of that person for 2 years. A hearing may be requested pursuant to s. 322.271.

(c) In any case charging a violation of paragraph (a), the court shall be provided a copy of the driving record of the person charged and may obtain any records from any other source to determine if one or more prior convictions of the person for violation of paragraph (a) have occurred within 5 years prior to the charged offense.

(3) Whenever a law enforcement officer determines that a person was engaged in a drag race or race, as described in subsection (1), the officer may immediately arrest and take such person into custody. The court may enter an order of impoundment or immobilization as a condition of incarceration or probation. Within 7 business days after the date the court issues the order of impoundment or immobilization, the clerk of the court must send notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the registered owner of the motor vehicle, if the registered owner is a person other than the defendant, and to each person of record claiming a lien against the motor vehicle.

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the impounding agency shall release a motor vehicle under the conditions provided in s. 316.193(6)(e), (f), (g), and (h), if the owner or agent presents a valid driver license at the time of pickup of the motor vehicle.

(b) All costs and fees for the impoundment or immobilization, including the cost of notification, must be paid by the owner of the motor vehicle or, if the motor vehicle is leased or rented, by the person leasing or renting the motor vehicle, unless the impoundment or immobilization order is dismissed. All provisions of s. 713.78 shall apply.

(c) Any motor vehicle used in violation of subsection (2) may be impounded for a period of 10 business days if a law enforcement officer has arrested and taken a person into custody pursuant to this subsection and the person being arrested is the registered owner or coowner of the motor vehicle. If the arresting officer finds that the criteria of this paragraph are met, the officer may immediately impound the motor vehicle. The law enforcement officer shall notify the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles of any impoundment for violation of this subsection in accordance with procedures established by the department. The provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) shall be applicable to such impoundment.

(4) Any motor vehicle used in violation of subsection (2) by any person within 5 years after the date of a prior conviction of that person for a violation under subsection (2) may be seized and forfeited as provided by the Florida Contraband Forfeiture Act. This subsection shall only be applicable if the owner of the motor vehicle is the person charged with violation of subsection (2).

(5)(4) This section does not apply to licensed or duly authorized race-tracks, drag strips, or other designated areas set aside by proper authorities for such purposes.

Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2005.

Approved by the Governor June 14, 2005.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 14, 2005.