

CHAPTER 2025-36

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 253

An act relating to offenses involving motor vehicles; amending s. 316.2397, F.S.; reclassifying the offense of driving, moving, or causing to be moved a vehicle or equipment with certain lighting on a highway as a third degree felony in a specified circumstance; amending s. 320.061, F.S.; increasing the penalty for knowingly altering a motor vehicle registration certificate, a license plate, a temporary license plate, a mobile home sticker, or a validation sticker or obscuring a license plate from a noncriminal traffic infraction to a second degree misdemeanor; creating s. 320.262, F.S.; defining the term “license plate obscuring device”; providing criminal penalties if a person purchases, possesses, manufactures, sells, offers to sell, or otherwise distributes a license plate obscuring device; providing an enhanced penalty if a person uses a license plate obscuring device for specified purposes; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (10) of section 316.2397, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsection (1) of that section is republished, to read:

316.2397 Certain lights prohibited; exceptions.—

(1) A person may not drive or move or cause to be moved any vehicle or equipment upon any highway within this state with any lamp or device thereon showing or displaying a red, red and white, or blue light visible from directly in front thereof except for certain vehicles provided in this section.

(10)(a) A person who violates subsection (1) and in so doing effects or attempts to effect a stop of another vehicle commits a felony misdemeanor of the third ~~first~~ degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, ~~or~~ s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

Section 2. Section 320.061, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

320.061 Unlawful to alter motor vehicle registration certificates, license plates, temporary license plates, mobile home stickers, or validation stickers or to obscure license plates; penalty.—A person may not alter the original appearance of a vehicle registration certificate, license plate, temporary license plate, mobile home sticker, or validation sticker issued for and assigned to a motor vehicle or mobile home, whether by mutilation, alteration, defacement, or change of color or in any other manner. A person may not apply or attach a substance, reflective matter, illuminated device, spray, coating, covering, or other material onto or around any license plate which interferes with the legibility, angular visibility, or detectability of any

feature or detail on the license plate or interferes with the ability to record any feature or detail on the license plate. A person who knowingly violates this section commits a misdemeanor of the second degree ~~noncriminal traffic infraction~~, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083 ~~a moving violation as provided in chapter 318.~~

Section 3. Section 320.262, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

320.262 License plate obscuring device prohibited; penalties.—

(1) As used in this section, the term “license plate obscuring device” means a manual, electronic, or mechanical device designed or adapted to be installed on a motor vehicle for the purpose of:

(a) Switching between two or more license plates to permit a motor vehicle operator to change the license plate displayed on the motor vehicle;

(b) Hiding a license plate from view by flipping the license plate so that the license plate number is not visible;

(c) Covering, obscuring, or otherwise interfering with the legibility, angular visibility, or detectability of the primary features or details, including the license plate number or validation sticker, on the license plate; or

(d) Interfering with the ability to record the primary features or details, including the license plate number or validation sticker, on the license plate.

(2) A person commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083, if he or she purchases or possesses a license plate obscuring device.

(3) A person commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083, if he or she manufactures, sells, offers to sell, or otherwise distributes a license plate obscuring device.

(4) A person commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084, if he or she uses a license plate obscuring device to assist in committing a crime or in escaping from or avoiding detection or arrest in connection with committing such crime.

Section 4. This act shall take effect October 1, 2025.

Approved by the Governor May 19, 2025.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 19, 2025.