WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2022 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 139

By Senators Takubo, Jeffries, Stollings, Lindsay, Woodrum, Woelfel, Grady, Plymale, and Maroney

[Introduced January 12, 2022; referred   
to the Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then to the Committee on the Judiciary]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section, designated §16-9A-11, relating to prohibiting smoking of tobacco products in a motor vehicle while an individual 16 years of age or younger is present; defining terms; making the violation a secondary misdemeanor offense; and providing a penalty.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 9A. TOBACCO USAGE RESTRICTIONS.

§16-9A-11. Smoking prohibited in motor vehicle while a person 16 years of age or less is present; penalty.

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “Lit tobacco product” means any lighted pipe, cigarette, cigar or other lighted device or product containing a tobacco-based product manufactured or made for the purpose of smoking.

(2) “Motor vehicle” means a Class A, Class B, Class H or Class J vehicle as those terms are defined in §17A-10-1 of this code.

(b) No person who is 18 years of age or older may smoke or possess a lit tobacco product in a motor vehicle if an individual 16 years of age or less is in the motor vehicle.

(c) Any person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than $25. No court costs or other fees may be assessed for a violation of this section.

(d) Enforcement of this section may only be accomplished as a secondary action when a driver of a vehicle, as defined in this section, has been detained for probable cause of violating another section of this code.

(e) Each time a driver of a vehicle is detained for probable cause of violating another provision of this code and is cited for the offense created pursuant to this section it shall be considered a single offense regardless of the number of individuals 16 years of age or less are in the motor vehicle.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to prohibit the use of lit tobacco products in a motor vehicle while individuals 16 years of age or under are present. The bill also provides that the misdemeanor offense is a secondary offense that may only be charged if a driver has been detained for violation of another vehicle law.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.