



2013 SENATE BILL 75

March 13, 2013 - Introduced by Senators HARS DORF, VINEHOUT, SCHULTZ and GROTHMAN, cosponsored by Representatives BROOKS, T. LARSON, BIES and BALLWEG. Referred to Committee on Transportation, Public Safety, and Veterans and Military Affairs.

- 1 **AN ACT to create** 348.08 (1) (j) of the statutes; **relating to:** operating certain
2 three-vehicle combinations on highways.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Current law generally prohibits any person from operating a vehicle on a highway while towing two or more vehicles unless an exception applies or the operator holds an appropriate permit issued by the Department of Transportation. One exception allows a person to operate, without a permit, a three-vehicle combination consisting of the following:

1. A towing vehicle.
2. A recreational vehicle or camping trailer.
3. Another recreational vehicle or camping trailer, or a trailer carrying any vehicle for recreational use or carrying no load. A “vehicle for recreational use” is defined to include a bicycle, moped, motor bicycle, motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle, utility terrain vehicle, snowmobile, boat, sailboard, personal watercraft, or electric personal assistive mobility device, but does not include an automobile, motor truck, motor home, play vehicle, or in-line skates.

Current law requires the heavier of the towed vehicles to occupy the middle position of the three-vehicle combination unless it is not structurally possible. The overall length of the combination of vehicles may not exceed 65 feet and, if the total loaded weight of all towed vehicles exceeds 3,000 pounds, one of the towed vehicles must be equipped with brakes. A three-vehicle combination may not be operated if specified highway or weather conditions are present.

This bill provides an exception for the operation of certain additional three-vehicle combinations without a permit. The bill allows a person to operate,

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without a permit, a three-vehicle combination not exceeding 70 feet in overall length if the towing vehicle serving as the power unit is equipped with a fifth wheel coupling, the second vehicle in the three-vehicle combination is a recreational vehicle or camping trailer, and the third vehicle in the three-vehicle combination is a recreational vehicle or camping trailer or a trailer carrying any vehicle for recreational use, carrying equestrian equipment and equestrian supplies for recreational purposes, or carrying no load. If the total loaded weight of all towed vehicles exceeds 3,000 pounds, one of the towed vehicles must also be equipped with brakes. These three-vehicle combinations may not be operated if specified highway or weather conditions are present.

For further information see the *state* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 348.08 (1) (j) of the statutes is created to read:

2 348.08 (1) (j) A 3-vehicle combination not exceeding 70 feet in overall length
3 may, without a permit, be operated on a highway if the towing vehicle serving as the
4 power unit is equipped with a 5th wheel and kingpin connection by which the 2nd
5 vehicle in the 3-vehicle combination is drawn, the 2nd vehicle in the 3-vehicle
6 combination is a recreational vehicle or camping trailer, including any combination
7 camping-horse trailer, the 3rd vehicle in the 3-vehicle combination is a recreational
8 vehicle or camping trailer or a trailer carrying any vehicle for recreational use,
9 carrying equestrian equipment and equestrian supplies for recreational purposes,
10 or carrying no load, and, if the total weight, including any load, of all towed vehicles
11 exceeds 3,000 pounds, one of the towed vehicles is equipped with brakes. No
12 3-vehicle combination may operate under this paragraph if highway or weather
13 conditions include heavy snow, freezing rain, icy roads, high winds, limited visibility,
14 or upon a highway that is closed or partially closed by the department due to highway
15 conditions.

