

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

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HOUSE BILL 740
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/11/21

Short Title: Defined Merging Areas/Zipper Merge.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

May 3, 2021

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE RULES OF THE ROAD WITH RESPECT TO MERGING
3 AT DEFINED MERGING AREAS AND REQUIRING DRIVERS EDUCATION ON THE
4 ZIPPER MERGE.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 SECTION 1. G.S. 20-155 reads as rewritten:

7 "§ 20-155. **Right-of-way.**

8 ...

9 (e) Where two lanes of traffic merge into one, drivers shall utilize both lanes until
10 reaching the merging area, and, beginning with the driver in the right lane, alternate yielding the
11 right-of-way until there is no longer a queue at the merging area."

12 SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 20-88.1 reads as rewritten:

13 "§ 20-88.1. **Driver education.**

14 ...

15 (d) The Division shall prepare a driver license handbook that explains the traffic laws of
16 the ~~State~~ State, including a description of the zipper merge, as defined in G.S. 115C-215, and
17 shall periodically revise the handbook to reflect changes in these laws. The Division, in
18 consultation with the State Highway Patrol, the North Carolina Sheriff's Association, and the
19 North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police, shall include in the driver license handbook a
20 description of law enforcement procedures during traffic stops and the actions that a motorist
21 should take during a traffic stop, including appropriate interactions with law enforcement
22 officers. At the request of the Department of Public Instruction, the Division shall provide free
23 copies of the handbook to that Department for use in the program of driver education offered at
24 public high schools."

25 SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 115C-215 reads as rewritten:

26 "§ 115C-215. **Administration of driver education program by the Department of Public**
27 **Instruction.**

28 ...

29 (b) The driver education curriculum shall include the following:

30 ...

31 (6) Instruction on the zipper merge. For purposes of this subdivision, "zipper
32 merge" means drivers utilize both lanes of traffic where two lanes merge into
33 one at a merging area, and, beginning with the driver in the right lane, alternate
34 yielding the right-of-way until there is no longer a queue at the merging area.

35"



1 **SECTION 3.** Section 1 of this act becomes effective October 1, 2021, and applies to
2 motor vehicle offenses charged on or after that date. Section 2(a) of this act becomes effective
3 January 1, 2022. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning
4 with the 2022-2023 school year.