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HOUSE BILL NO. 667

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled January 6, 2020

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 46.2-357 of the Code of Virginia, relating to habitual offenders; driving while intoxicated.*

Patron—Mullin

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 46.2-357 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 46.2-357. Operation of motor vehicle or self-propelled machinery or equipment by habitual offender prohibited; penalty; enforcement of section.**

A. It shall be unlawful for any person determined or adjudicated an habitual offender to drive any motor vehicle or self-propelled machinery or equipment on the highways of the Commonwealth while the revocation of the person's driving privilege remains in effect. However, the revocation determination shall not prohibit the person from operating any farm tractor on the highways when it is necessary to move the tractor from one tract of land used for agricultural purposes to another tract of land used for agricultural purposes, provided that the distance between the said tracts of land is no more than five miles.

B. Except as provided in subsection D, any person found to be an habitual offender under this article, who is thereafter convicted of driving a motor vehicle or self-propelled machinery or equipment in the Commonwealth while the revocation determination is in effect, shall be punished as follows:

1. If such driving does not of itself endanger the life, limb, or property of another, such person shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor punishable by a mandatory minimum term of confinement in jail of 10 days except in cases wherein such operation is necessitated in situations of apparent extreme emergency that require such operation to save life or limb, the sentence, or any part thereof, may be suspended.

2. If such driving of itself endangers the life, limb, or property of another or takes place while such person is in violation of §§ 18.2-36.1, or 18.2-51.4, 18.2-266 or § 46.2-341.24, irrespective of whether the driving of itself endangers the life, limb or property of another and the person has been previously convicted of a violation of §§ 18.2-36.1, 18.2-51.4, 18.2-266 or § 46.2-341.24, such person shall be guilty of a felony punishable by confinement in a state correctional facility for not less than one year nor more than five years, one year of which shall be a mandatory minimum term of confinement or, in the discretion of the jury or the court trying the case without a jury, by mandatory minimum confinement in jail for a period of 12 months. However, in cases wherein such operation is necessitated in situations of apparent extreme emergency that require such operation to save life or limb, the sentence, or any part thereof, may be suspended. For the purposes of this section, an offense in violation of a valid local ordinance, or law of any other jurisdiction, which ordinance or law is substantially similar to any provision of law herein shall be considered an offense in violation of such provision of law.

3. If the offense of driving while a determination as an habitual offender is in effect is a second or subsequent such offense, such person shall be punished as provided in subdivision 2 of this subsection, irrespective of whether the offense, of itself, endangers the life, limb, or property of another.

C. For the purpose of enforcing this section, in any case in which the accused is charged with driving a motor vehicle or self-propelled machinery or equipment while his license, permit, or privilege to drive is suspended or revoked or is charged with driving without a license, the court before hearing the charge shall determine whether the person has been determined an habitual offender and, by reason of this determination, is barred from driving a motor vehicle or self-propelled machinery or equipment on the highways in the Commonwealth. If the court determines the accused has been determined to be an habitual offender and finds there is probable cause that the alleged offense under this section is a felony, it shall certify the case to the circuit court of its jurisdiction for trial.

D. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions 2 and 3 of subsection B, following conviction and prior to imposition of sentence with the consent of the defendant, the court may order the defendant to be evaluated for and to participate in the community corrections alternative program pursuant to § 19.2-316.4.

INTRODUCED

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