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HOUSE BILL NO. 2142

Offered January 20, 1999

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 46.2-208 and 46.2-833.01 of the Code of Virginia, relating to records of the Department of Motor Vehicles and use of photo-monitoring equipment to enforce traffic light signals; penalty.

Patrons—Moran (By Request); Senator: Ticer

Referred to Committee on Transportation

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That §§ 46.2-208 and 46.2-833.01 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 46.2-208. Records of Department; when open for inspection; release of privileged information.

A. All records in the office of the Department containing the specific classes of information outlined below shall be considered privileged records:

1. Personal information, including all data defined as "personal information" in § 2.1-379;

2. Driver information, including all data that relates to driver's license status and driver activity; and

3. Vehicle information, including all descriptive vehicle data and title, registration, and vehicle activity data.

B. The Commissioner shall release such information only under the following conditions:

1. Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, medical data included in personal data shall be released only to a physician as provided in § 46.2-322.

2. Insurance data may be released as specified in §§ 46.2-372, 46.2-380, and 46.2-706.

3. Notwithstanding other provisions of this section, information disclosed or furnished shall be assessed a fee as specified in § 46.2-214.

4. When the person requesting the information is (i) the subject of the information, (ii) the parent or guardian of the subject of the information, (iii) the authorized representative of the subject of the information, or (iv) the owner of the vehicle that is the subject of the information, the Commissioner shall provide him with the requested information and a complete explanation of it. Requests for such information need not be made in writing or in person and may be made orally or by telephone, provided that the Department is satisfied that there is adequate verification of the requester's identity. When so requested in writing by (i) the subject of the information, (ii) the parent or guardian of the subject of the information, (iii) the authorized representative of the subject of the information, or (iv) the owner of the vehicle that is the subject of the information, the Commissioner shall verify and, if necessary, correct the personal information provided and furnish driver and vehicle information in the form of an abstract of the record.

5. On the written request of any insurance carrier, surety, or representative of an insurance carrier or surety, the Commissioner shall furnish such insurance carrier, surety, or representative an abstract of the record of any person subject to the provisions of this title. The abstract shall include any record of any conviction of a violation of any provision of any statute or ordinance relating to the operation or ownership of a motor vehicle or of any injury or damage in which he was involved and a report of which is required by § 46.2-372. No such report of any conviction or accident shall be made after sixty months from the date of the conviction or accident unless the Commissioner or court used the conviction or accident as a reason for the suspension or revocation of a driver's license or driving privilege, in which case the revocation or suspension and any conviction or accident pertaining thereto shall not be reported after sixty months from the date that the driver's license or driving privilege has been reinstated. This abstract shall not be admissible in evidence in any court proceedings.

6. On the written request of any business organization or its agent, in the conduct of its business, the Commissioner shall compare personal information supplied by the business organization or agent with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the business organization or agent is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the business organization or agent with correct information as contained in the Department's records. Personal information provided under this subdivision shall be used solely for the purpose of pursuing remedies which require locating an individual.

7. The Commissioner shall provide vehicle information to any business organization or agent on such business' or agent's written request. Disclosures made under this subdivision shall not include any personal information and shall not be subject to the limitations contained in subdivision 6 of this subsection.

8. On the written request of any motor vehicle rental or leasing company or its designated agent, the

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60 Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by the company or agent with that
61 contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the company or agent is
62 different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the company or agent with correct
63 information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide the company or agent with driver
64 information in the form of an abstract of any person subject to the provisions of this title. Such abstract
65 shall include any record of any conviction of a violation of any provision of any statute or ordinance
66 relating to the operation or ownership of a motor vehicle or of any injury or damage in which the
67 subject of the abstract was involved and a report of which is required by § 46.2-372. No such abstract
68 shall include any record of any conviction or accident more than sixty months after the date of such
69 conviction or accident unless the Commissioner or court used the conviction or accident as a reason for
70 the suspension or revocation of a driver's license or driving privilege, in which case the revocation or
71 suspension and any conviction or accident pertaining thereto shall cease to be included in such abstract
72 after sixty months from the date on which the driver's license or driving privilege was reinstated. No
73 abstract released under this subdivision shall be admissible in evidence in any court proceedings.

74 9. On the request of any federal, state, or local governmental entity, law-enforcement officer, attorney
75 for the Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, the Commissioner shall
76 (i) compare personal information supplied by the governmental entity, officer, attorney for the
77 Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, with that contained in the
78 Department's records and, when the information supplied by the governmental entity, officer, attorney
79 for the Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, is different from that
80 contained in the Department's records, provide the governmental entity, officer, attorney for the
81 Commonwealth, court, or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, with correct information as
82 contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide driver and vehicle information in the form of an
83 abstract of the record showing all convictions, accidents, driver's license suspensions or revocations, and
84 other appropriate information as the governmental entity, officer, attorney for the Commonwealth, court,
85 or the authorized agent of any of the foregoing, may require in order to carry out its official functions.

86 10. On request of the driver licensing authority in any other state or foreign country, the
87 Commissioner shall provide whatever classes of information the requesting authority shall require in
88 order to carry out its official functions.

89 11. On the written request of any employer, prospective employer, or authorized agent of either, and
90 with the written consent of the individual concerned, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal
91 information supplied by the employer, prospective employer, or agent with that contained in the
92 Department's records and, when the information supplied by the employer, prospective employer, or
93 agent is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the employer, prospective
94 employer, or agent with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide the
95 employer, prospective employer, or agent with driver information in the form of an abstract of an
96 individual's record showing all convictions, accidents, driver's license suspensions or revocations, and
97 any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses, provided that the individual's position
98 or the position that the individual is being considered for involves the operation of a motor vehicle.

99 12. On the written request of any member of or applicant for membership in a volunteer fire
100 company or volunteer rescue squad, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied
101 by the volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad with that contained in the Department's records
102 and, when the information supplied by the volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad is different
103 from that contained in the Department's records, provide the volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue
104 squad with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide driver
105 information in the form of an abstract of the member's or applicant's record showing all convictions,
106 accidents, license suspensions or revocations, and any type of driver's license that the individual
107 currently possesses. Such abstract shall be provided free of charge if the request is accompanied by
108 appropriate written evidence that the person is a member of or applicant for membership in a volunteer
109 fire company or volunteer rescue squad and the abstract is needed by a volunteer fire company or
110 volunteer rescue squad to establish the qualifications of the member or applicant to operate equipment
111 owned by the volunteer fire company or volunteer rescue squad.

112 13. On the written request of any person who has applied to be a volunteer with a Virginia affiliate
113 of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information
114 supplied by a Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America with that contained in the
115 Department's records and, when the information supplied by a Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big
116 Sisters of America is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the Virginia
117 affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America with correct information as contained in the
118 Department's records and (ii) provide driver information in the form of an abstract of the applicant's
119 record showing all convictions, accidents, license suspensions or revocations, and any type of driver's
120 license that the individual currently possesses. Such abstract shall be provided free of charge if the
121 request is accompanied by appropriate written evidence that the person has applied to be a volunteer

with a Virginia affiliate of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America.

14. On the written request of any person who has applied to be a volunteer with a court-appointed special advocate program pursuant to § 9-173.8, the Commissioner shall provide an abstract of the applicant's record showing all convictions, accidents, license suspensions or revocations, and any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses. Such abstract shall be provided free of charge if the request is accompanied by appropriate written evidence that the person has applied to be a volunteer with a court-appointed special advocate program pursuant to § 9-173.8.

15. Upon the request of any employer, prospective employer, or authorized representative of either, the Commissioner shall (i) compare personal information supplied by the employer, prospective employer, or agent with that contained in the Department's records and, when the information supplied by the employer, prospective employer, or agent is different from that contained in the Department's records, provide the employer, prospective employer, or agent with correct information as contained in the Department's records and (ii) provide driver information in the form of an abstract of the driving record of any individual who has been issued a commercial driver's license, provided that the individual's position or the position that the individual is being considered for involves the operation of a commercial motor vehicle. Such abstract shall show all convictions, accidents, license suspensions, revocations, or disqualifications, and any type of driver's license that the individual currently possesses.

16. Upon the receipt of a completed application and payment of applicable processing fees, the Commissioner may enter into an agreement with any governmental authority or business to exchange information specified in this section by electronic or other means.

17. Upon the request of an attorney representing a person in a motor vehicle accident, the Commissioner shall provide vehicle information, including the owner's name and address, to the attorney.

18. Upon the request, in the course of business, of any authorized representative of an insurance company or of any not-for-profit entity organized to prevent and detect insurance fraud, the Commissioner shall provide all vehicle information, including the owner's name and address, descriptive data and title, registration, and vehicle activity data to such person.

19. Upon the request of an officer authorized to issue criminal warrants, for the purpose of issuing a warrant for arrest for unlawful disposal of trash or refuse in violation of § 33.1-346, the Commissioner shall provide vehicle information, including the owner's name and address.

20. Upon written request of the compliance agent of a private security services business, as defined in § 9-183.1, which is licensed by the Department of Criminal Justice Services, the Commissioner shall provide the name and address of the owner of the vehicle under procedures determined by the Commissioner.

21. Upon the request of the operator of a toll facility, or an authorized agent or employee of a toll facility operator, for the purpose of obtaining vehicle owner data under subsection H of § 46.2-819.1.

22. Upon the request of a locality authorized to operate a traffic light signal enforcement program under § 46.2-833.01, or an authorized agent or employee of any such locality, for the purpose of obtaining vehicle owner data for use in connection with such traffic light signal enforcement program.

C. Whenever the Commissioner issues an order to suspend or revoke the driver's license or driving privilege of any individual, he may notify the National Driver Register Service operated by the United States Department of Transportation and any similar national driver information system and provide whatever classes of information the authority may require.

D. Accident reports may be inspected under the provisions of §§ 46.2-379 and 46.2-380.

E. Whenever the Commissioner takes any licensing action pursuant to the provisions of the Virginia Commercial Driver's License Act (§ 46.2-341.1 et seq.), he may provide information to the Commercial Driver License Information System, or any similar national commercial driver information system, regarding such action.

F. In addition to the foregoing provisions of this section, vehicle information may also be inspected under the provisions of §§ 43-33, 43-34, 46.2-633, and 46.2-1200.1 through 46.2-1237.

G. The Department may promulgate regulations to govern the means by which personal, vehicle, and driver information is requested and disseminated.

H. Driving records of any person accused of an offense involving the operation of a motor vehicle shall be provided by the Commissioner upon request to any person acting as counsel for the accused. If such counsel is from the public defender's office or has been appointed by the court, such records shall be provided free of charge.

I. The Department shall maintain the records of persons convicted of violations of subsection B of § 29.1-738, and §§ 29.1-738.02, 29.1-738.2, and 29.1-738.4 which shall be forwarded by every general district court or circuit court or the clerk thereof, pursuant to § 46.2-383. Such records shall be electronically available to any law-enforcement officer as provided for under clause (ii) of subdivision B 9 of this section.

§ 46.2-833.01. (Effective until July 1, 2005) Use of photo-monitoring equipment to enforce traffic light signals; pilot program in certain localities; penalty.

A. The governing body of any city having a population of more than 390,000, any city having a population of at least 200,000 but less than 225,000, any county having the urban county executive form of government, any county adjacent to such county, and any city or town adjacent to or surrounded by such county except any county having the county executive form of government and the cities surrounded by such county may provide by ordinance for the establishment of a demonstration program imposing monetary liability on the operator of a motor vehicle for failure to comply with traffic light signals in such locality in accordance with the provisions of this section. Each such locality may install and operate traffic light signal photo-monitoring systems at no more than twenty-five intersections within each locality at any one time.

B. The operator of a vehicle shall be liable for a monetary penalty imposed pursuant to this section if such vehicle is found, as evidenced by information obtained from a traffic light signal violation monitoring system, to have failed to comply with a traffic light signal within such locality.

C. Proof of a violation of this section shall be evidenced by information obtained from a traffic light signal violation monitoring system authorized pursuant to this section. A certificate, sworn to or affirmed by a technician employed by a locality authorized to impose penalties pursuant to this section, or a facsimile thereof, based upon inspection of photographs, microphotographs, videotape, or other recorded images produced by a traffic light signal violation monitoring system, shall be prima facie evidence of the facts contained therein. Any photographs, microphotographs, videotape, or other recorded images evidencing such a violation shall be available for inspection in any proceeding to adjudicate the liability for such violation pursuant to an ordinance adopted pursuant to this section.

D. In the prosecution of an offense established under this section, prima facie evidence that the vehicle described in the summons issued pursuant to this section was operated in violation of this section, together with proof that the defendant was at the time of such violation the registered owner of the vehicle, shall constitute in evidence a rebuttable presumption that such registered owner of the vehicle was the person who committed the violation. Such presumption shall be rebutted if the registered owner of the vehicle (i) files an affidavit by regular mail with the clerk of the general district court that he or she was not the operator of the vehicle at the time of the alleged violation or (ii) testifies in open court under oath that he or she was not the operator of the vehicle at the time of the alleged violation. Such presumption shall also be rebutted if a certified copy of a police report, showing that the vehicle had been reported to the police as stolen prior to the time of the alleged violation of this section, is presented, prior to the return date established on the summons issued pursuant to this section, to the court adjudicating the alleged violation.

E. For purposes of this section "owner" means the registered owner of such vehicle on record with the Department of Motor Vehicles. For purposes of this section "owner" does not mean a vehicle rental or vehicle leasing company. For purposes of this section, "traffic light signal violation-monitoring system" means a vehicle sensor installed to work in conjunction with a traffic light that automatically produces two or more photographs, two or more microphotographs, a videotape, or other recorded images of each vehicle at the time it is used or operated in violation of this section.

F. Imposition of a penalty pursuant to this section shall not be deemed a conviction as an operator and shall not be made part of the operating record of the person upon whom such liability is imposed nor shall it be used for insurance purposes in the provision of motor vehicle insurance coverage. No monetary penalty imposed under this section shall exceed ~~fifty dollars~~ \$100 nor shall it include court costs.

G. A summons for a violation of this section may be executed pursuant to § 19.2-76.2. Notwithstanding the provisions of § 19.2-76, a summons for a violation of this section may be executed by mailing by first-class mail a copy thereof to the address of the owner of the vehicle as shown on the records of the Department of Motor Vehicles. If the summoned person fails to appear on the date of return set out in the summons mailed pursuant to this section, the summons shall be executed in the manner set out in § 19.2-76.3. No proceedings for contempt or arrest of a person summoned by mailing shall be instituted for failure to appear on the return date of the summons.

H. In any action at law brought by any person or entity as the result of personal injury or death or damage to property, such evidence derived from a photo-monitoring system shall be admissible in the same method prescribed as required in the prosecution of an offense established under this section without the requirements of authentication as otherwise required by law.

I. ~~On behalf of a locality, a private entity may not obtain records regarding the registered owners of vehicles which fail to comply with traffic light signals.~~ A private entity may enter into an agreement with a locality to be compensated for providing the traffic light signal violation monitor system or equipment, and all related support services, to include consulting, operations and administration. However, only an employee of the locality may swear to or affirm the certificate required by subsection C.

245 J. The provisions of this section shall expire on July 1, 2005.

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