

SENATE BILL NO. 386
INTRODUCED BY J. SHOCKLEY

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR PERSONS WHO DRIVE ON PUBLIC HIGHWAYS WITHOUT OBTAINING A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 61-5-102 AND 61-5-212, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 61-5-102, MCA, is amended to read:

"61-5-102. Drivers to be licensed -- penalties. (1) Except as provided in 61-5-104, a person may not drive a motor vehicle upon a highway in this state unless the person has a valid Montana driver's license. A person may not receive a Montana driver's license until the person surrenders to the department all valid driver's licenses issued by any other jurisdiction. A person may not have in the person's possession or under the person's control more than one valid Montana driver's license at any time. The penalty for a first violation of this section is provided in 61-5-307. The penalty for second and subsequent violations of this section is provided in 61-5-212.

(2) (a) A license is not valid for the operation of a motorcycle unless the holder of the license has completed the requirements of 61-5-110 and the license has been clearly marked with the words "motorcycle endorsement".

(b) A license is not valid for the operation of a commercial motor vehicle unless the holder of the license has completed the requirements of 61-5-110, the license has been clearly marked with the words "commercial driver's license", and the license bears the proper endorsement for:

- (i) the specific vehicle type or types being operated; or
- (ii) the passengers or type or types of cargo being transported.

(3) When a city or town requires a licensed driver to obtain a local driving license or permit, a license or permit may not be issued unless the applicant presents a state driver's license valid under the provisions of this chapter."

Section 2. Section 61-5-212, MCA, is amended to read:

"61-5-212. Driving while license suspended or revoked -- penalty -- second offense of driving without valid license or licensing exemption -- seizure of vehicle or rendering vehicle inoperable. (1) (a)

A person commits the offense of driving a motor vehicle without a valid license or without statutory exemption or during a suspension or revocation period if the person drives:

(i) a motor vehicle on any public highway of this state at a time when the person's privilege to do so is suspended or revoked in this state or any other state; ~~or~~

(ii) a commercial motor vehicle while the person's commercial driver's license is revoked, suspended, or canceled in this state or any other state or the person is disqualified from operating a commercial motor vehicle under federal regulations; or

(iii) a motor vehicle on any public highway of this state without possessing a valid driver's license, as provided in 61-5-102, or without proof of a statutory exemption, as provided in 61-5-104.

(b) (i) Except as provided in subsection (1)(b)(ii), a A person convicted of the offense of driving a motor vehicle without a valid driver's license or without proof of a statutory exemption for the second time or driving during a suspension or revocation period shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than 2 days or more than 6 months and may be fined not more than \$500, ~~except that if~~.

(ii) If the reason for the suspension or revocation was that the person was convicted of a violation of 61-8-401 or 61-8-406 or a similar offense under the laws of any other state or the suspension was under 61-8-402 or 61-8-409 or a similar law of any other state for refusal to take a test for alcohol or drugs requested by a peace officer who believed that the person might be driving under the influence, the person shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of not less than 2 days or more than 6 months or a fine not to exceed \$2,000, or both, and in addition, the court may order the person to perform up to 40 hours of community service.

(2) (a) The department upon receiving a record of the conviction of any person under this section upon a charge of driving a noncommercial vehicle while the person's driver's license or privilege to drive was suspended or revoked shall extend the period of suspension or revocation for an additional 1-year period.

(b) Upon receiving a record of the conviction of any person under this section upon a charge of driving a commercial motor vehicle while the person's commercial driver's license was revoked, suspended, or canceled or the person was disqualified from operating a commercial motor vehicle under federal regulations, the department shall suspend the person's commercial driver's license in accordance with 61-8-802.

(3) The vehicle owned and operated at the time of an offense under this section by a person whose driver's license is suspended for violating the provisions of 61-8-401, 61-8-402, 61-8-406, 61-8-409, or 61-8-410 must, upon a person's first conviction, be seized or rendered inoperable by the county sheriff of the convicted person's county of residence for a period of 30 days.

(4) The sentencing court shall order the action provided for under subsection (3) and shall specify the

date on which the vehicle is to be returned or again rendered operable. The vehicle must be seized or rendered inoperable by the sheriff within 10 days after the conviction.

(5) A convicted person is responsible for all costs associated with actions taken under subsection (3). Joint ownership of the vehicle with another person does not prohibit the actions required by subsection (3) unless the sentencing court determines that those actions would constitute an extreme hardship on a joint owner who is determined to be without fault.

(6) A court may not suspend or defer imposition of penalties provided by this section."

- END -

