

Relates to the regulation of commercial motor vehicles, increased weight allowances for natural gas, and the enforcement of motor vehicle laws

Section 1 amends Iowa Code section 321.180(2)(c) to extend the time a commercial learner's permit (CLP) may be valid from no more than 180 days to the period as provided in 49 CFR 383.25(c) and 49 CFR 383.73(a)(2)(iii). Removes the provision that a CLP may be renewed for an additional 180 days without retaking the general and endorsement knowledge tests.

Section 2 amends Iowa Code section 321.463 by inserting a new subsection for additional weight allowances for natural gas to align with changes in Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act federal legislation. Allows a motor vehicle equipped with an engine fueled primarily by natural gas to exceed any applicable maximum gross weight limits under Iowa Code chapter 321, up to a maximum gross weight of 82,000 pounds, as determined by certain factors. Allows these motor vehicles equipped with an auxiliary power or idle reduction technology unit that reduces fuel use and emissions during engine idling to exceed any applicable maximum gross weight limit under Iowa Code chapter 321 by 550 pounds or the weight of the auxiliary power or idle reduction technology unit, whichever is less. To be eligible for this exception, the operator of the vehicle must be able to provide to the DOT a written certification of the weight of the auxiliary power or idle reduction technology unit; demonstrate or certify to the DOT that the idle reduction technology unit is fully functional at all times; and carry with the operator the written certification of the weight of the auxiliary power or idle reduction technology unit in the vehicle at all times to present to law enforcement as needed.

Section 3 amends Iowa Code section 321.477 to clarify the DOT peace officers' authority to enforce all laws of the state, including, but not limited to, the rules and regulations of the DOT, including the apprehension of violators. Requires these DOT peace officers who are assigned to the supervision of Iowa highways to spend the majority of their time conducting enforcement activities that assure safe and lawful movement and operation of commercial motor vehicles and vehicles transporting loads. Limits the DOT peace officers to exercise the general powers of a peace officer within any city when so ordered by the governor; when a request is made by the mayor of any city, with the approval of the DOT director; as requested by a sheriff or county attorney, with the approval of the DOT director; while in the pursuit of law violators or in investigating law violations; while making any inspection provided in Iowa Code chapter 321, or any additional inspection ordered by the DOT director; or when engaged in the investigation and enforcement of laws relating to narcotic, counterfeit, stimulant, and depressant drugs. These limits within a city shall not prohibit the power of DOT peace officers when a public offense is being committed in their presence. Amends Iowa Code section 321.477 to require the DOT to submit a report to the General Assembly on or before December 1 of each year detailing the nature and scope of motor vehicle enforcement activities conducted in the previous fiscal year by DOT peace officers who are assigned to the supervision of Iowa highways. The report must include a comparison of commercial and noncommercial motor vehicle enforcement activities conducted by DOT peace officers.

Section 4 repeals section 3 of this bill on July 1, 2018.

Section 5 makes section 3 of this bill effective on May 11, 2017.