H-1048.2

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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1207**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2021 Regular Session**

**By** House Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Ramel, Boehnke, Lekanoff, Lovick, Ortiz-Self, Eslick, Bergquist, and Leavitt; by request of Department of Licensing)

AN ACT Relating to improving access to department of licensing issued documents by extending the issuance period of driver licenses and identicards to eight years, allowing online issuance and renewal of instruction permits, and expanding online renewal of driver licenses and identicards; amending RCW 46.20.049, 46.20.055, 46.20.091, 46.20.120, 46.20.161, 46.20.181, 46.20.202, and 46.20.505; reenacting and amending RCW 46.20.117; creating new sections; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that a driver's license or identicard is a fundamental document that Washingtonians need to live, work, drive, and access essential needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly reduced the department of licensing's ability to provide in-person driver licensing services, resulting in a growing backlog of customers that cannot access the agency's critical services. This act is intended to address that backlog by expanding online renewals, extending driver's license and identicard issuance up to eight years, and providing more online options for instruction permits. The legislature recognizes the critical role of the department of licensing's front line staff during the pandemic and does not intend that this act will result in staffing reductions at the department of licensing now or in the future. To ensure that a driver's license and identicard remain affordable for Washington residents, the legislature intends for the department of licensing to continue to offer a six-year issuance option. The legislature further recognizes the potential of remote photo capture to enable expanded online renewals while ensuring that customer information remains updated. In implementing remote photo capture, the legislature intends that the department of licensing will prioritize data security and antifraud features as well as closely monitor its usage. The legislature also intends that within a year of initial implementation of remote photo capture, driver's license and identicard photos should be updated with each renewal whenever possible, recognizing that technology limitations and other challenges will prevent some customers from using remote photo capture.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.049 and 2012 c 80 s 11 are each amended to read as follows:

There shall be an additional fee for issuing any class of commercial driver's license in addition to the prescribed fee required for the issuance of the original driver's license. The additional fee for each class shall be ((~~eighty-five dollars from October 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, and one hundred two dollars after June 30, 2013,~~)) one hundred thirty-six dollars for the original commercial driver's license or subsequent renewals. If the commercial driver's license is issued, renewed, or extended for a period other than ((~~five~~)) eight years ((~~from October 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, or six years after June 30, 2013~~)), the fee for each class shall be seventeen dollars for each year that the commercial driver's license is issued, renewed, or extended. The fee shall be deposited in the highway safety fund.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.055 and 2017 c 197 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) **Driver's instruction permit**. The department may issue a driver's instruction permit online or in person with or without a photograph to an applicant who has successfully passed all parts of the examination other than the driving test, provided the information required by RCW 46.20.091, paid an application fee of twenty-five dollars, and meets the following requirements:

(a) Is at least fifteen and one-half years of age; or

(b) Is at least fifteen years of age and:

(i) Has submitted a proper application; and

(ii) Is enrolled in a driver training education course offered as part of a traffic safety education program authorized by the office of the superintendent of public instruction and certified under chapter 28A.220 RCW or offered by a driver training school licensed and inspected by the department of licensing under chapter 46.82 RCW, that includes practice driving.

(2) **Waiver of written examination for instruction permit**. The department may waive the written examination, if, at the time of application, an applicant is enrolled in a driver training education course as defined in RCW 46.82.280 or 28A.220.020.

The department may require proof of registration in such a course as it deems necessary.

(3) **Effect of instruction permit**. A person holding a driver's instruction permit may drive a motor vehicle, other than a motorcycle, upon the public highways if:

(a) The person has immediate possession of the permit;

(b) The person is not using a wireless communications device, unless the person is using the device to report illegal activity, summon medical or other emergency help, or prevent injury to a person or property; and

(c) A driver training education course instructor who meets the qualifications of chapter 46.82 or 28A.220 RCW, or a licensed driver with at least five years of driving experience, occupies the seat beside the driver.

(4) **Term of instruction permit**. A driver's instruction permit is valid for one year from the date of issue.

(a) The department may issue one additional one-year permit.

(b) The department may issue a third driver's permit if it finds after an investigation that the permittee is diligently seeking to improve driving proficiency.

(c) A person applying for an additional instruction permit must submit the application to the department ((~~in person~~)) and pay an application fee of twenty-five dollars for each issuance.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.091 and 2000 c 115 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) **Application**. In order to apply for a driver's license or instruction permit the applicant must provide his or her:

(a) Name of record, as established by documentation required under RCW 46.20.035;

(b) Date of birth, as established by satisfactory evidence of age;

(c) Sex;

(d) Washington residence address;

(e) Description;

(f) Driving licensing history, including:

(i) Whether the applicant has ever been licensed as a driver or chauffeur and, if so, (A) when and by what state or country; (B) whether the license has ever been suspended or revoked; and (C) the date of and reason for the suspension or revocation; or

(ii) Whether the applicant's application to another state or country for a driver's license has ever been refused and, if so, the date of and reason for the refusal; and

(g) Any additional information required by the department.

(2) **Sworn statement**. An application for an instruction permit or for an original driver's license must be made upon a form provided by the department. The form must include a section for the applicant to indicate whether he or she has received driver training and, if so, where. The identifying documentation verifying the name of record must be accompanied by the applicant's ((~~written~~)) sworn statement that it is valid. ((~~The~~)) For an original driver's license, the information provided on the form must be sworn to and signed by the applicant before a person authorized to administer oaths. An applicant who makes a false statement on an application for a driver's license or instruction permit is guilty of false swearing, a gross misdemeanor, under RCW 9A.72.040.

(3) **Driving records from other jurisdictions**. If a person previously licensed in another jurisdiction applies for a Washington driver's license, the department shall request a copy of the applicant's driver's record from the other jurisdiction. The driving record from the other jurisdiction becomes a part of the driver's record in this state.

(4) **Driving records to other jurisdictions**. If another jurisdiction requests a copy of a person's Washington driver's record, the department shall provide a copy of the record. The department shall forward the record without charge if the other jurisdiction extends the same privilege to the state of Washington. Otherwise the department shall charge a reasonable fee for transmittal of the record.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.117 and 2020 c 261 s 2 and 2020 c 124 s 2 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1) **Issuance**. The department shall issue an identicard, containing a picture, if the applicant:

(a) Does not hold a valid Washington driver's license;

(b) Proves his or her identity as required by RCW 46.20.035; and

(c) Pays the required fee. Except as provided in subsection (7) of this section, the fee is ((~~fifty-four~~)) seventy-two dollars, unless an applicant is:

(i) A recipient of continuing public assistance grants under Title 74 RCW, who is referred in writing by the secretary of social and health services;

(ii) Under the age of twenty-five and does not have a permanent residence address as determined by the department by rule; or

(iii) An individual who is scheduled to be released from an institution as defined in RCW 13.40.020, a community facility as defined in RCW 72.05.020, or other juvenile rehabilitation facility operated by the department of social and health services or the department of children, youth, and families; or an individual who has been released from such an institution or facility within thirty calendar days before the date of the application.

For those persons under (c)(i) through (iii) of this subsection, the fee must be the actual cost of production of the identicard.

(2)(a) **Design and term**. The identicard must:

(i) Be distinctly designed so that it will not be confused with the official driver's license; and

(ii) Except as provided in subsection (7) of this section, expire on the ((~~sixth~~)) eighth anniversary of the applicant's birthdate after issuance.

(b) The identicard may include the person's status as a veteran, consistent with RCW 46.20.161(4).

(c) If applicable, the identicard may include a medical alert
designation as provided in subsection (5) of this section.

(3) **Renewal**. An application for identicard renewal may be submitted by means of:

(a) Personal appearance before the department; ((~~or~~))

(b) Mail or electronic commerce, if permitted by rule of the department and if the applicant did not renew his or her identicard by mail or by electronic commerce when it last expired; or

(c) From January 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024, electronic commerce, if permitted by rule of the department.

An identicard may not be renewed by mail or by electronic commerce unless the renewal issued by the department includes a photograph of the identicard holder.

(4) **Cancellation**. The department may cancel an identicard if the holder of the identicard used the card or allowed others to use the card in violation of RCW 46.20.0921.

(5) Any person may apply to the department to obtain a medical alert designation, a developmental disability designation, or a deafness designation on an identicard issued under this chapter by providing:

(a) Self-attestation that the individual:

(i) Has a medical condition that could affect communication or account for a health emergency;

(ii) Is deaf or hard of hearing; or

(iii) Has a developmental disability as defined in RCW 71A.10.020;

(b) A statement from the person that they have voluntarily provided the self-attestation and other information verifying the condition; and

(c) For persons under eighteen years of age or who have a developmental disability, the signature of a parent or legal guardian.

(6) A self-attestation or data contained in a self-attestation provided under this section:

(a) Shall not be disclosed; and

(b) Is for the confidential use of the director, the chief of the Washington state patrol, and law enforcement and emergency medical service providers as designated by law.

(7) **Alternative issuance/renewal/extension**. The department may issue or renew an identicard for a period other than ((~~six~~)) eight years, or may extend by mail or electronic commerce an identicard that has already been issued((~~, in order to evenly distribute, as nearly as possible, the yearly renewal rate of identicard holders~~)). The fee for an identicard issued or renewed for a period other than ((~~six~~)) eight years, or that has been extended by mail or electronic commerce, is nine dollars for each year that the identicard is issued, renewed, or extended. The department must offer the option to issue or renew an identicard for six years in addition to the eight year issuance. The department may adopt any rules as are necessary to carry out this subsection.

(8) Identicard photos must be updated in the same manner as driver's license photos under RCW 46.20.120(5).

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.120 and 2012 c 80 s 7 are each amended to read as follows:

An applicant for a new or renewed driver's license must successfully pass a driver licensing examination to qualify for a driver's license. The department must ensure that examinations are given at places and times reasonably available to the people of this state. If the department does not administer driver licensing examinations as a routine part of its licensing services within a department region because adequate testing sites are provided by driver training schools or school districts within that region, the department shall, at a minimum, administer driver licensing examinations by appointment to applicants eighteen years of age and older in at least one licensing office within that region.

(1) **Waiver**. The department may waive:

(a) All or any part of the examination of any person applying for the renewal of a driver's license unless the department determines that the applicant is not qualified to hold a driver's license under this title; or

(b) All or any part of the examination involving operating a motor vehicle if the applicant:

(i) Surrenders a valid driver's license issued by the person's previous home state; or

(ii) Provides for verification a valid driver's license issued by a foreign driver licensing jurisdiction with which the department has an informal agreement under RCW 46.20.125; and

(iii) Is otherwise qualified to be licensed.

(2) **Fee**. Each applicant for a new license must pay an examination fee of thirty-five dollars.

(a) The examination fee is in addition to the fee charged for issuance of the license.

(b) "New license" means a license issued to a driver:

(i) Who has not been previously licensed in this state; or

(ii) Whose last previous Washington license has been expired for more than ((~~six~~)) eight years.

(3) An application for driver's license renewal may be submitted by means of:

(a) Personal appearance before the department; ((~~or~~))

(b) Mail or electronic commerce, if permitted by rule of the department and if the applicant did not renew his or her license by mail or by electronic commerce when it last expired; or

(c) From January 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024, electronic commerce, if permitted by rule of the department.

(4) A person whose license expired or will expire while he or she is living outside the state, may:

(a) Apply to the department to extend the validity of his or her license for no more than twelve months. If the person establishes to the department's satisfaction that he or she is unable to return to Washington before the date his or her license expires, the department shall extend the person's license. The department may grant consecutive extensions, but in no event may the cumulative total of extensions exceed twelve months. An extension granted under this section does not change the expiration date of the license for purposes of RCW 46.20.181. The department shall charge a fee of five dollars for each license extension;

(b) Apply to the department to renew his or her license by mail or, if permitted by rule of the department, by electronic commerce even if subsection (3)(b) of this section would not otherwise allow renewal by that means. If the person establishes to the department's satisfaction that he or she is unable to return to Washington within twelve months of the date that his or her license expires, the department shall renew the person's license by mail or, if permitted by rule of the department, by electronic commerce.

(5) If a qualified person submits an application for renewal under subsection (3)(b) or (c) or (4)(b) of this section, he or she is not required to pass an examination ((~~nor~~)) and needs to provide an updated photograph only every sixteen years, except that persons under 30 years of age must provide an updated photograph every eight years. Beginning January 1, 2023, persons renewing through electronic commerce must provide an updated photograph in a form and manner approved by the department with each renewal unless they are unable to provide a photograph that meets the department's requirements. A license renewed by mail or by electronic commerce that does not include a photograph of the licensee must be labeled "not valid for identification purposes."

(6) Driver training schools licensed by the department under chapter 46.82 RCW may administer the portions of the driver licensing examination that test the applicant's knowledge of traffic laws and ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.

(7) School districts that offer a traffic safety education program under chapter 28A.220 RCW may administer the portions of the driver licensing examination that test the applicant's knowledge of traffic laws and ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.161 and 2020 c 261 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department, upon receipt of a fee of ((~~forty-five~~)) seventy-two dollars ((~~from October 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, and fifty-four dollars after June 30, 2013~~)), unless the driver's license is issued for a period other than ((~~five~~)) eight years ((~~from October 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, or six years after June 30, 2013~~)), in which case the fee shall be nine dollars for each year that the license is issued, which includes the fee for the required photograph, shall issue to every qualifying applicant a driver's license. A driver's license issued to a person under the age of eighteen is an intermediate license, subject to the restrictions imposed under RCW 46.20.075, until the person reaches the age of eighteen.

(2) The license must include:

(a) A distinguishing number assigned to the licensee;

(b) The name of record;

(c) Date of birth;

(d) Washington residence address;

(e) Photograph;

(f) A brief description of the licensee;

(g) Either a facsimile of the signature of the licensee or a space upon which the licensee shall write his or her usual signature with pen and ink immediately upon receipt of the license;

(h) If applicable, the person's status as a veteran as provided in subsection (4) of this section; and

(i) If applicable, a medical alert designation as provided in subsection (5) of this section.

(3) No license is valid until it has been signed by the licensee.

(4)(a) A veteran, as defined in RCW 41.04.007, or an individual who otherwise meets the criteria of RCW 41.04.007 but who has received a general discharge under honorable conditions, may apply to the department to obtain a veteran designation on a driver's license issued under this section by providing:

(i) A United States department of veterans affairs identification card or proof of service letter;

(ii) A United States department of defense discharge document, DD Form 214 or DD Form 215, as it exists on June 7, 2018, or such subsequent date as may be provided by the department by rule, consistent with the purposes of this section, or equivalent or successor discharge paperwork, that shows a discharge status of "honorable" or "general under honorable conditions" that establishes the person's service in the armed forces of the United States;

(iii) A national guard state-issued report of separation and military service, NGB Form 22, as it exists on June 7, 2018, or such subsequent date as may be provided by the department by rule, consistent with the purposes of this section, or equivalent or successor discharge paperwork, that shows a discharge status of "honorable" or "general under honorable conditions" that establishes the person's active duty or reserve service in the national guard; or

(iv) A United States uniformed services identification card, DD Form 2, that displays on its face that it has been issued to a retired member of any of the armed forces of the United States, including the national guard and armed forces reserves.

(b) The department may permit a veteran, as defined in RCW 41.04.007, or an individual who otherwise meets the criteria of RCW 41.04.007 but who has received a general discharge under honorable conditions, to submit an alternate form of documentation to apply to obtain a veteran designation on a driver's license, as specified by rule, that requires a discharge status of "honorable" or "general under honorable conditions" and that establishes the person's service as required under RCW 41.04.007.

(5) Any person may apply to the department to obtain a medical alert designation, a developmental disability designation, or a deafness designation on a driver's license issued under this chapter by providing:

(a) Self-attestation that the individual:

(i) Has a medical condition that could affect communication or account for a driver health emergency;

(ii) Is deaf or hard of hearing; or

(iii) Has a developmental disability as defined in RCW 71A.10.020;

(b) A statement from the person that they have voluntarily provided the self-attestation and other information verifying the condition; and

(c) For persons under eighteen years of age or who have a developmental disability, the signature of a parent or legal guardian.

(6) A self-attestation or data contained in a self-attestation provided under this section:

(a) Shall not be disclosed;

(b) Is for the confidential use of the director, the chief of the Washington state patrol, and law enforcement and emergency medical service providers as designated by law; and

(c) Is subject to the privacy protections of the driver's privacy protection act, 18 U.S.C. Sec. 2725.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.181 and 2012 c 80 s 9 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Except as provided in subsection (4) or (5) of this section, every driver's license expires on the ((~~sixth~~)) eighth anniversary of the licensee's birthdate following the issuance of the license.

(2) A person may renew his or her license on or before the expiration date by submitting an application as prescribed by the department and paying a fee of ((~~forty-five~~)) seventy-two dollars ((~~from October 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, and fifty-four dollars after June 30, 2013~~)). This fee includes the fee for the required photograph.

(3) A person renewing his or her driver's license more than sixty days after the license has expired shall pay a penalty fee of ten dollars in addition to the renewal fee, unless his or her license expired when:

(a) The person was outside the state and he or she renews the license within sixty days after returning to this state; or

(b) The person was incapacitated and he or she renews the license within sixty days after the termination of the incapacity.

(4) The department may issue or renew a driver's license for a period other than ((~~five~~)) eight years ((~~from October 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, or six years after June 30, 2013~~)), or may extend by mail or electronic commerce a license that has already been issued((~~, in order to evenly distribute, as nearly as possible, the yearly renewal rate of licensed drivers~~)). The fee for a driver's license issued or renewed for a period other than ((~~five~~)) eight years ((~~from October 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, or six years after June 30, 2013~~)), or that has been extended by mail or electronic commerce, is nine dollars for each year that the license is issued, renewed, or extended. The department must offer the option to issue or renew a driver's license for six years in addition to the eight year issuance. The department may adopt any rules as are necessary to carry out this subsection.

(5) A driver's license that includes a hazardous materials endorsement under chapter 46.25 RCW may expire on an anniversary of the licensee's birthdate other than the ((~~sixth~~)) eighth year following issuance or renewal of the license in order to match, as nearly as possible, the validity of certification from the federal transportation security administration that the licensee has been determined not to pose a security risk. The fee for a driver's license issued or renewed for a period other than ((~~five~~)) eight years ((~~from October 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013, or six years after June 30, 2013,~~)) is nine dollars for each year that the license is issued or renewed, not including any endorsement fees. The department may adjust the expiration date of a driver's license that has previously been issued to conform to the provisions of this subsection if a hazardous materials endorsement is added to the license subsequent to its issuance. If the validity of the driver's license is extended, the licensee must pay a fee of nine dollars for each year that the license is extended.

(6) The department may adopt any rules as are necessary to carry out this section.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.202 and 2017 c 310 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The department may enter into a memorandum of understanding with any federal agency for the purposes of facilitating the crossing of the border between the state of Washington and the Canadian province of British Columbia.

(2) The department may enter into an agreement with the Canadian province of British Columbia for the purposes of implementing a border-crossing initiative.

(3)(a) The department may issue an enhanced driver's license or identicard for the purposes of crossing the border between the state of Washington and the Canadian province of British Columbia to an applicant who provides the department with proof of: United States citizenship, identity, and state residency. The department shall continue to offer a standard driver's license and identicard. If the department chooses to issue an enhanced driver's license, the department must allow each applicant to choose between a standard driver's license or identicard, or an enhanced driver's license or identicard.

(b) The department shall implement a one-to-many biometric matching system for the enhanced driver's license or identicard. An applicant for an enhanced driver's license or identicard shall submit a biometric identifier as designated by the department. The biometric identifier must be used solely for the purpose of verifying the identity of the holders and for any purpose set out in RCW 46.20.037. Applicants are required to sign a declaration acknowledging their understanding of the one-to-many biometric match.

(c) The enhanced driver's license or identicard must include reasonable security measures to protect the privacy of Washington state residents, including reasonable safeguards to protect against unauthorized disclosure of data about Washington state residents. If the enhanced driver's license or identicard includes a radio frequency identification chip, or similar technology, the department shall ensure that the technology is encrypted or otherwise secure from unauthorized data access.

(d) The requirements of this subsection are in addition to the requirements otherwise imposed on applicants for a driver's license or identicard. The department shall adopt such rules as necessary to meet the requirements of this subsection. From time to time the department shall review technological innovations related to the security of identity cards and amend the rules related to enhanced driver's licenses and identicards as the director deems consistent with this section and appropriate to protect the privacy of Washington state residents.

(e) Notwithstanding RCW 46.20.118, the department may make images associated with enhanced drivers' licenses or identicards from the negative file available to United States customs and border agents for the purposes of verifying identity.

(4) Beginning on July 23, 2017, the fee for an enhanced driver's license or enhanced identicard is ((~~twenty-four~~)) thirty-two dollars, which is in addition to the fees for any regular driver's license or identicard. If the enhanced driver's license or enhanced identicard is issued, renewed, or extended for a period other than ((~~six~~)) eight years, the fee for each class is four dollars for each year that the enhanced driver's license or enhanced identicard is issued, renewed, or extended.

(5) The enhanced driver's license and enhanced identicard fee under this section must be deposited into the highway safety fund unless prior to July 1, 2023, the actions described in (a) or (b) of this subsection occur, in which case the portion of the revenue that is the result of the fee increased in section 209, chapter 44, Laws of 2015 3rd sp. sess. must be distributed to the connecting Washington account created under RCW 46.68.395.

(a) Any state agency files a notice of rule making under chapter 34.05 RCW for a rule regarding a fuel standard based upon or defined by the carbon intensity of fuel, including a low carbon fuel standard or clean fuel standard.

(b) Any state agency otherwise enacts, adopts, orders, or in any way implements a fuel standard based upon or defined by the carbon intensity of fuel, including a low carbon fuel standard or clean fuel standard.

(c) Nothing in this subsection acknowledges, establishes, or creates legal authority for the department of ecology or any other state agency to enact, adopt, order, or in any way implement a fuel standard based upon or defined by the carbon intensity of fuel, including a low carbon fuel standard or clean fuel standard.

**Sec.**  RCW 46.20.505 and 2012 c 80 s 13 are each amended to read as follows:

Every person applying for a special endorsement of a driver's license authorizing such person to drive a two or three-wheeled motorcycle or a motor-driven cycle shall pay a fee of five dollars, which is not refundable. In addition, the endorsement fee for the initial motorcycle endorsement shall not exceed ((~~twelve~~)) sixteen dollars, unless the endorsement is issued for a period other than ((~~six~~)) eight years, in which case the endorsement fee shall not exceed two dollars for each year the initial motorcycle endorsement is issued. The subsequent renewal endorsement fee shall not exceed ((~~thirty~~)) forty dollars, unless the endorsement is renewed or extended for a period other than ((~~six~~)) eight years, in which case the subsequent renewal endorsement fee shall not exceed five dollars for each year that the endorsement is renewed or extended. Fees collected under this section shall be deposited in the motorcycle safety education account of the highway safety fund.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The department of licensing must evaluate the impact of expanded online renewals and remote photo capture on backlog reduction, access to services, employment, public safety, identity fraud, and other topics as determined by the department. In completing this evaluation, the department of licensing must consult with relevant stakeholders and experts, including law enforcement, organizations representing the department's employees, organizations with expertise in data security and identity fraud, organizations representing commercial drivers, and others as determined by the department. The department of licensing must submit a report to the governor and transportation committees of the legislature by December 1, 2023.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 2 and 5 through 11 of this act take effect January 1, 2022.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1, 3, and 4 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and take effect immediately.

**--- END ---**