



The Senate
NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
P.O. BOX 500129
SAIPAN, MP 96950

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 24-53
Date: December 2, 2025
RE: Senate Bill No. 24-40

Honorable Karl R. King-Nabors
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. President:

Your Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law, to which Senate Bill No. 24-40 was referred, entitled:

“To amend 9 CMC §3114 by requiring the Department of Public Safety’s Rules & Regulations regarding Commercial vehicles be consistent with those of the United States Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; and for other purposes,”

begs leave to report as follows:

I. RECOMMENDATION:

After considerable discussion and deliberation, your Committee recommends the passage of Senate Bill No. 24-40 in its current form.

II. ANALYSIS:

A. Purpose:

The purpose of Senate Bill No. 24-40 is to ensure that the rules and regulations of the Department of Public Safety are consistent with the United States Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration by amending 9 CMC § 3114.

B. Committee Findings:

Your Committee finds that the current rules and regulations governing motor carriers, motor carrier drivers, equipment, and the transportation of hazardous materials, as adopted by the Department of Public Safety, are outdated and insufficient in addressing the needs of the Commonwealth's roadways. With an increasing number of motor vehicles, including a rising number of imported vehicles, accessing the roads, the Commonwealth's rules and regulations must align with the national standards to ensure the safety and well-being of both motorists and pedestrians.

Your Committee further finds that Senate Bill No. 24-40 intends to update the existing rules and regulations of the CNMI Department of Public Safety to be consistent with the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations under Title 49 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations, which issues amendments to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) and the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMRs). Updating the rules and regulations for motor vehicles would clarify rules for vehicles on the road and ensure motor safety, licensing, and registration for all vehicles on the roadways of the Commonwealth.

Your Committee met on December 2, 2025, to formally discuss the proposed legislation. Acknowledging the necessity to update the rules and regulations of the Department of Public Safety for the safety of all motorists, your Committee supports the intent of the proposed legislation and recommends the passage of Senate Bill No. 24-40 in its current form.

C. Legislative History:

Senate Bill No. 24-40 was formally introduced by Senator Dennis C. Mendiola on July 3, 2025 and was subsequently referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law for disposition.

D. Public Hearing and Comment:

1. Public Hearing. No public hearing was scheduled for Senate Bill No. 24-40. However, a committee meeting, which is open to the public, was held on December 2, 2025. See below for further details.
2. Committee Meeting. The proposed legislation made its first appearance during the scheduled committee meeting on Tuesday, December 2, 2025. The committee meeting notices and agenda were officially posted on November 26, 2025, on various legislative forums and social media sites to invite members of the general public to provide comments as indicated under Item No. IV. Public Comment on the Committee Agenda. However, no oral testimonies in support or in opposition of the proposed legislation were presented to your Committee.

3. Written Comment. Your Committee sent out several requests for comments on the proposed legislation. To date, the status of comments received from the following government and private entities is as follows:

- a. Honorable Ramon “RB” Jose Blas Camacho, Mayor of the Municipality of Saipan, *letter dated August 5, 2025*
- b. Department of Public Safety, *no comment received*
- c. DPS Bureau of Motor Vehicles, *no comment received*

E. Estimated Fiscal Cost:

No fiscal analysis was prepared for the proposed legislation.

The enactment of Senate Bill No. 24-40 will result in manageable costs to the Commonwealth for associated costs of updating and printing of official documents, training of relevant personnel, and public outreach efforts to ensure awareness of the updated rules and regulations governing motor vehicles. However, the long-term benefits of enhanced safety will contribute to a safer driving experience for all communities within the Commonwealth.

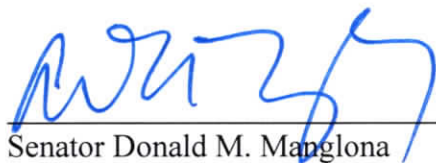
F. Summary of Committee Amendments:

Your Committee agreed that no further amendments were needed.


III. CONCLUSION:

Your Committee agrees with the intent and purpose of the proposed legislation and recommends the passage of Senate Bill No. 24-40 in its current form.

Respectfully submitted,



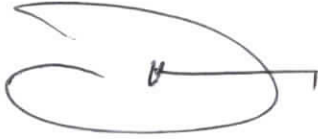
Senator Donald M. Manglona
Chairperson



Senator Manny Gregory T. Castro
Vice Chairperson

Senator Celina R. Babauta
Member

Senator Ronnie M. Calvo
Member



Senator Francisco Q. Cruz
Member

Senator Corina L. Magofna
Member

Reviewed by:



Senate Legal Counsel

Attachment(s):

1. Written Testimonies:

- a. Honorable Ramon "RB" Jose Blas Camacho, Mayor of the Municipality of Saipan,
letter dated August 5, 2025



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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Ramon "RB" Jose Blas Camacho
 Mayor of Saipan



August 5, 2025

The Honorable Karl King- Nabors
 Chairman, Senate Standing Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law
 24th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
 P.O. Box 500129
 Saipan, MP 96950



Subject: Senate Bill No. 24- 40: "To amend 9 CMC subsection 3114 by requiring the Department of Public Safety's Rules and Regulations regarding Commercial Vehicles be consistent with those of the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; and for other purposes."

Hafa Adai yan Tirow Chairman King- Nabors,

Thank you for providing the Office of the Mayor, Municipality of Saipan the opportunity to provide comments on the above subject. I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 24-40, "To amend 9 CMC subsection 3114 by requiring the Department of Public Safety's Rules and Regulations regarding Commercial Vehicles be consistent with those of the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; and for other purposes."

As a retired member of the Department of Public Safety, I fully understand the importance of aligning our local commercial vehicle regulations with federal safety standards. Consistency with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) will enhance public safety, improve regulatory compliance, and help ensure that commercial vehicle operations in the Commonwealth meet nationally recognized benchmarks.

This amendment is a responsible and necessary step in modernizing our transportation regulations, increasing roadway safety for all motorists, and strengthening the enforcement capabilities of DPS.

I commend the authors of this legislation for taking proactive measures to safeguard our communities and support the professional standards of our enforcement personnel. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (670)234-6208 or via email at saipanmayor@mos.gov.mp.

Sincerely,

RAMON "RB" JOSE BLAS CAMACHO
 Mayor, Office of the Municipality of Saipan

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To amend 9 CMC §3114 by requiring the Department of Public Safety's Rules & Regulations regarding Commercial vehicles be consistent with those of the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:

1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that as the
2 Commonwealth continuous to grow and more motor carriers operate on our highways,
3 there is an increased need to update the regulations adopted by the Department of Public
4 Safety in regards to Commercial Motor Vehicles. These updates reflect the changes made
5 by the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety
6 Administration. These regulations ensure that each motor carrier that operates on our
7 highways met the minimum safety requirements as determined by the Federal Motor
8 Carrier Safety Administration and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance.

9 **Section 2. Amendment.** 9 CMC § 3114 of the Commonwealth Code is hereby
10 amended to read as follows:

11 **"§ 3114. Rules and Regulations.**

12 The Department of Public Safety shall adopt rules and regulations
13 prescribing the permissible requirements for motor carriers, motor carrier drivers,
14 equipment and the transportation of hazardous materials and sanctions for their
15 violation which are consistent with comparable regulations of the United States
16 Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

1 relating to these subjects as contained in Title 49 of the United States Code of
 2 Federal Regulations.

3 (a) ~~Unless exception is made by the Department of Public Safety after~~
 4 ~~public hearings held pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act [1 CMC § 9101~~
 5 ~~et seq.]~~ The rules of the Department shall be current with the rules adopted by
 6 the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety
 7 Administration in under Title 49 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations,
 8 Amendments to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and the Federal
 9 Hazardous Materials Regulations after the effective date of this section shall
 10 automatically be adopted by the Department of Public Safety's rules and
 11 regulations, as now or hereafter amended, relating to requirements for motor
 12 carriers, motor carrier drivers, equipment and the transportation of hazardous
 13 materials.

14 (b) The Department of Public Safety is authorized to conduct inspections
 15 pursuant to the rules and regulations adopted and to impose fines and sanctions for
 16 violations thereof.

17 (c) Applicability. Provisions in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety
 18 Regulations, the Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations and the Department of
 19 Public Safety's rules and regulations shall apply to Inter-State and Intra-State Motor
 20 Carriers."

21 **Section 3. Amendment.** 9 CMC § 1102 of the Commonwealth Code is hereby
 22 amended to read as follows:

23 **"§ 1102. Definitions.**

24 In this title, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions
 25 apply:

26 (a) "Bicycle" means any motorless contrivance operated with not more than
 27 three wheels in contact with the ground and propelled by human power.

28 (b) "Bureau" means the Bureau of Motor Vehicles established by this title.

1 (c) "Chauffeur" means a person who is employed for the principal purpose
2 of operating a motor vehicle on the highways for compensation.

3 (d) "Chief" means the Chief of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles established
4 by this title.

5 (e) "Commercial motor vehicle" ~~means a vehicle of a type required to be~~
6 ~~registered by this title, used or maintained for the transportation of persons for hire,~~
7 ~~compensation or profit, or designed, used or maintained primarily for the~~
8 ~~transportation of property.~~ means a motor vehicle or combination of motor vehicles
9 used in commerce to transport passengers or property of the motor vehicle:

10 (1) Has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross combination weight
11 rating of 10,001 or more pounds;

12 (2) The vehicle is designed to transport more than eight passengers,
13 including the driver; or

14 (3) Is of any size and is used in the transportation of materials found
15 to be hazardous for the purposes of the Hazardous Materials Transportation
16 Act [49 U.S.C. Appx. § 1801 et seq.] which require motor vehicles to be
17 placarded under the Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 C.F.R. Part 172,
18 Subpart F).

19 (f) A "Crosswalk" means:

20 (1) That portion of a highway ordinarily included within the
21 prolongation or connection of the boundary lines of sidewalks at
22 intersections where the intersecting highways meet at approximately right
23 angles, except the prolongation of any such lines from an alley; or

24 (2) Any portion of a highway distinctly indicated for use as a
25 pedestrian crossing by lines or other markings on the surface.

26 (g) "Dealer" means a person engaged in the business of buying, selling or
27 exchanging vehicles of a type required to be registered by this title who has an
28 established place of business for that purpose in the Commonwealth.

29 (h) "Department" means the Department of Public Safety.

- 1 (i) "Director" means the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety,
2 except where otherwise delineated in the Title.
- 3 (j) "Emergency brake" means any braking gear or mechanism for applying
4 braking effort to at least two wheels of a vehicle, normally operated by the
5 operator's hand. If any vehicle has two brakes, both designed to be operated by the
6 foot, a brake with a ratchet or other device for holding the brake in the applied
7 position shall be construed as an emergency brake.
- 8 (k) "Established place of business" means a place actually occupied either
9 continuously or at regular periods by a dealer, or where the dealer's books and
10 records are kept, or where a substantial part of a business is transacted.
- 11 (l) "Explosive" means any chemical, compound or mechanical mixture that
12 is commonly used or intended for the purpose of producing an explosion sufficient
13 to produce destructive effects upon persons or property.
- 14 (m) "Garage" means a building or other place in which the business of
15 storing or safekeeping of vehicles belonging to members of the public is conducted.
- 16 (n) "Headlight" means a complete road illuminating device located upon
17 the front of a vehicle, the rays of which are projected forward, other than a sidelight,
18 auxiliary driving light, searching or spot light.
- 19 (o) "Heavy equipment vehicle" means any motor vehicle weighing over a
20 gross weight of 2.5 tons and manufactured with an open area separate from the
21 driver's compartment and designed primarily for the transportation of property.
- 22 (p) "Highway" means a way or place of whatever nature open to the use of
23 the public for purposes of vehicular traffic, including ways or places that are
24 privately owned or maintained.
- 25 (q) "Intersection" means the area embraced within the prolongation of the
26 lateral curb lines or, if none, then of the lateral boundary lines of two or more
27 highways which join one another at approximately right angles or the area within
28 which vehicles traveling upon different highways joining at any other angle may
29 intersect.

1 (r) “Interstate motor carrier” means an individual or company that is in
 2 trade, traffic, or transportation of between the CNMI and another jurisdiction;
 3 including movements made within the CNMI that originated in, terminated in, or
 4 went through another jurisdiction. Intrastate motor carrier means a carrier that
 5 performs trade, traffic, or transportation exclusively within the CNMI.

6 (†) (s) “Moped” means a motor-driven vehicle designed to travel on not
 7 more than three wheels in contact with the ground, with or without pedals to permit
 8 propulsion by human power, and with a motor or engine size of less than 50 cubic
 9 centimeters.

10 (‡) (t) “Motor bus” means a motor vehicle operated for the carriage of
 11 passengers for hire or a school bus which is designed to carry more than eight
 12 passengers.

13 (†) (u) “Motor carrier” means an individual or company that is contracted or
 14 private carriers of property and passengers, including their agents, officers and
 15 representatives who engage in inter-state and/or intra-state commerce, motor
 16 vehicle or combination of motor vehicles used in commerce to transport passengers
 17 or property if the motor vehicle:

18 (1) ~~Has a gross vehicle weight rating or gross combination weight~~
 19 ~~rating of 10,001 or more pounds;~~

20 (2) ~~The vehicle is designed to transport more than eight passengers,~~
 21 ~~including the driver; or~~

22 (3) ~~Is of any size and is used in the transportation of materials found~~
 23 ~~to be hazardous for the purposes of the Hazardous Materials Transportation~~
 24 ~~Act [49 U.S.C. Appx. § 1801 et seq.] which require motor vehicles to be~~
 25 ~~placarded under the Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 C.F.R. Part 172,~~
 26 ~~Subpart F).~~

27 (†) (v) “Motorcycle” means a motor vehicle, other than a bicycle, moped,
 28 motor scooter, or tractor, designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact
 29 with the ground with an engine size greater than 250 cubic centimeters.

1 (v) (w) "Motor scooter" means a motor vehicle designed to travel on not
 2 more than three wheels in contact with the ground, with an engine size greater than
 3 50 cubic centimeters but less than 250 cubic centimeters, and with a step-through
 4 frame.

5 (w) (x) "Motor truck" means a motor vehicle designed, used or maintained
 6 primarily for the transportation of property.

7 (x) (y) "Motor vehicle" means a ~~device in, upon or by which any person or~~
 8 ~~property is or may be propelled, moved or drawn upon a highway~~ motor vehicle
 9 driven or drawn by mechanical power and manufactured primarily for use of public
 10 streets, road, and highways, but does not include a vehicle operated only on a rail
 11 line.

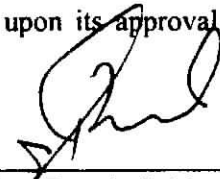
12 (y) (z) "Pickup truck" means any motor vehicle weighing under a gross
 13 weight of 2.5 tons and manufactured with an open area separate from the driver's
 14 compartment and designed primarily for the transportation of property."

15 **Section 4. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application of any such
 16 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent
 17 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or
 18 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

19 **Section 5. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be
 20 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes
 21 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers
 22 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior
 23 law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way
 24 modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date
 25 this Act becomes effective.

Section 6. Effective Date. This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the Governor, or it becoming law without such approval.

Date: 7/3/25

Introduced by: 
Sen. Dennis C. Mendiola

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:


Senate Legal Counsel