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SB-909 Emergency vehicles. (2019-2020)

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Senate Bill No. 909

CHAPTER 262

An act to amend Section 27002 of the Vehicle Code, relating to emergency vehicles, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2020. Filed with Secretary of State September 29, 2020.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 909, Dodd. Emergency vehicles.

Existing law prohibits any vehicle, other than an authorized emergency vehicle, from being equipped with a siren. Existing law requires an emergency vehicle to be equipped with a siren that meets requirements set forth by the Department of the California Highway Patrol.

Existing regulations of the California Highway Patrol define a "Hi-Lo" to be a nonsiren sound alternating between a fixed high and a fixed low frequency and require the "Hi-Lo" function to be disabled on any siren manufactured after January 1, 1978.

This bill would authorize an emergency vehicle to be equipped with a "Hi-Lo" audible warning sound and would authorize the "Hi-Lo" to be used solely for the purpose of notifying the public of an immediate need to evacuate.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 27002 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

27002. (a) No vehicle, except an authorized emergency vehicle, shall be equipped with, nor shall any person use upon a vehicle any siren except that an authorized emergency vehicle shall be equipped with a siren meeting requirements established by the department.

(b) An authorized emergency vehicle may also be equipped with a Hi-Lo audible warning sound meeting requirements established by the department.

(c) A Hi-Lo warning sound may only be used to notify the public of an immediate evacuation in case of an emergency and is not a siren. For the purposes of Section 21055, a Hi-Lo shall not be used in lieu of a siren if the sounding of a siren is reasonably necessary pursuant to that section.

SEC. 2. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order for first responders to be prepared to protect the lives of Californians in case of a natural disaster or other large-scale emergency, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.