

Subject Misdemeanor traffic violations
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Overview

This bill makes it a misdemeanor if a vehicle operator violates traffic or motor vehicle regulations and causes great bodily harm or death (unless another penalty is established). It is effective August 1, 2019, for acts committed on or after that date.

Under current law, there is a default petty misdemeanor penalty in the chapter of statutes governing traffic regulations, motor vehicle equipment, and vehicle size and weight limits. Various prohibitions in the chapter carry a higher penalty.

Background. “Great bodily harm” is defined in the criminal code, and it includes bodily injury that (1) creates a high chance of death, (2) causes serious disfigurement, or (3) causes permanent or protracted impairment of a part of the body. A misdemeanor penalty is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to 90 days, or both.