

ASSEMBLY BILL**No. 1944**

Introduced by Assembly Member LeeFebruary 13, 2026

An act to amend Section 35554 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1944, as introduced, Lee. Zero-emission transit buses: axle weight.

Existing law prohibits the maximum gross weight on any one axle of a bus from exceeding 20,500 pounds, except the maximum limit for the curb weight on any one axle of a transit bus procured through a solicitation process pursuant to which a solicitation was issued on or after January 1, 2019, is set at 22,000 pounds. Existing law, notwithstanding the previous provisions, sets specified higher maximum limits up to 25,000 pounds for the curb weight on any one axle of an articulated transit bus or zero-emission transit bus procured through a solicitation process pursuant to which a solicitation was issued during specified periods between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2021, inclusive, and sets the 22,000-pound maximum limit for an articulated transit bus or zero-emission transit bus procured through a solicitation process pursuant to which a solicitation was issued on or after January 1, 2022. A violation of this provision is a crime.

This bill would, until January 1, 2032, establish specified higher weight limitations up to 25,000 pounds for zero-emission transit buses procured through a solicitation process pursuant to which a solicitation was issued at various specified periods between January 1, 2027, and December 31, 2031 inclusive.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 35554 of the Vehicle Code is amended
2 to read:
3 35554. (a) (1) Notwithstanding Section 35550, the maximum
4 gross weight on any one axle of a bus shall not exceed 20,500
5 pounds.
6 (2) This subdivision does not apply to a transit bus procured
7 through a solicitation process pursuant to which a solicitation was
8 issued before January 1, 2016. This subdivision does not apply to
9 a bus purchased during an option period in a multiyear contract to
10 purchase transit buses that is entered into before January 1, 2016,
11 by a publicly owned or operated transit system, or an operator of
12 a transit system under contract with a publicly owned or operated
13 transit system, provided, however, that the option period does not
14 exceed five years from the date of the original contract, or extend
15 beyond January 1, 2021, whichever is earlier.
16 (b) A transit bus is not subject to Section 35550.
17 (c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), the following provisions
18 shall apply to a transit bus:
19 (1) The curb weight on any one axle of a transit bus procured
20 through a solicitation process pursuant to which a solicitation was
21 issued between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2018, inclusive,
22 shall not exceed 23,000 pounds.
23 (2) The curb weight on any one axle of a transit bus procured
24 through a solicitation process pursuant to which a solicitation was
25 issued on or after January 1, 2019, shall not exceed 22,000 pounds.
26 (d) Notwithstanding subdivisions (a) and (c), the following
27 provisions shall apply to an articulated transit bus or zero-emission
28 transit bus:
29 (1) The curb weight on any one axle of an articulated transit
30 bus or zero-emission transit bus procured through a solicitation
31 process pursuant to which a solicitation was issued between
32 January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2017, inclusive, shall not
33 exceed 25,000 pounds.
34 (2) The curb weight on any one axle of an articulated transit
35 bus or zero-emission transit bus procured through a solicitation

1 process pursuant to which a solicitation was issued between
2 January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2019, inclusive, shall not
3 exceed 24,000 pounds.

4 (3) The curb weight on any one axle of an articulated transit
5 bus or zero-emission transit bus procured through a solicitation
6 process pursuant to which a solicitation was issued between
7 January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2021, inclusive, shall not
8 exceed 23,000 pounds.

9 (4) The curb weight on any one axle of an articulated transit
10 bus or zero-emission transit bus procured through a solicitation
11 process pursuant to which a solicitation was issued on or after
12 January 1, 2022, shall not exceed 22,000 pounds.

13 (e) *Notwithstanding subdivisions (a), (c), and (d), the following*
14 *provisions shall apply to a zero-emission transit bus:*

15 (1) *The curb weight on any one axle of a zero-emission transit*
16 *bus procured through a solicitation process pursuant to which a*
17 *solicitation was issued between January 1, 2027, and December*
18 *31, 2027, inclusive, shall not exceed 25,000 pounds.*

19 (2) *The curb weight on any one axle of a zero-emission transit*
20 *bus procured through a solicitation process pursuant to which a*
21 *solicitation was issued between January 1, 2028, and December*
22 *31, 2029, inclusive, shall not exceed 24,000 pounds.*

23 (3) *The curb weight on any one axle of a zero-emission transit*
24 *bus procured through a solicitation process pursuant to which a*
25 *solicitation was issued between January 1, 2030, and December*
26 *31, 2031, inclusive, shall not exceed 23,000 pounds.*

27 (4) *The curb weight on any one axle of a zero-emission transit*
28 *bus procured through a solicitation process pursuant to which a*
29 *solicitation was issued on or after January 1, 2032, shall not*
30 *exceed 22,000 pounds.*

31 ~~(e)~~

32 (f) Nothing in this article shall be construed to authorize a
33 vehicle described in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) or described
34 in subdivision ~~(e)~~ or ~~(d)~~ (c), (d), or (e) to be operated in violation
35 of Section 35753.

36 ~~(f)~~

37 (g) A transit operator operating an articulated transit bus shall,
38 by July 1, 2016, provide notice to all cities and counties in whose
39 jurisdiction the bus will operate in the upcoming calendar year,
40 identifying the approximate routes upon which the bus is expected

1 to be scheduled for service, including the names of streets and
2 roads upon which that service is likely to take place. Thereafter,
3 a transit operator operating an articulated transit bus shall annually
4 provide notice by July 1, to all cities and counties in whose
5 jurisdiction the bus will operate in the upcoming calendar year,
6 identifying any changes to the service on those routes and any new
7 routes upon which the bus is expected to be scheduled for the
8 upcoming year. The notice shall include data from information
9 provided by the bus manufacturer to the transit operator, identifying
10 the weight of the articulated bus.

11 ~~(g)~~

12 *(h)* For purposes of this section, the term “curb weight” means
13 the total weight of a fully loaded transit bus, including maximum
14 fuel, oil, and coolant, and all equipment used in the normal
15 operation of the bus, except without passengers or a driver.

16 ~~(h)~~

17 *(i)* Notwithstanding subdivisions (a) to ~~(g)~~, *(h)*, inclusive, a
18 transit bus shall not operate on the Dwight D. Eisenhower System
19 of Interstate and Defense Highways in excess of the weight
20 limitation for transit buses specified in federal law.

21 ~~(i)~~

22 *(j)* If the gross weight imposed upon the highway by the wheels
23 on any one axle of a transit bus exceeds 20,000 pounds, the axle
24 shall be supported by four wheels bearing load upon the highway.