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'Move over' law expanded to improve roadside safety *SB 34 requires motorists to stop or slow down for vehicles with hazard lights*

SALEM – The Oregon Senate today passed a bill to improve safety of motorists stranded alongside the road by expanding existing “move over” laws.

Senate Bill 34 – which passed by a 16-13 vote on the Senate floor – adds standard motor vehicles pulled alongside the road, when it displays emergency lights, signs or flares, to the list for whom motorists must either move into another lane or slow down when they pass.

“This bill will improve safety for motorists, who already are experiencing some form of roadside emergency, by requiring passing vehicles to move over or slow down,” said Sen. Floyd Prozanski (D-Eugene), who carried the bill on the Senate floor. “We’ve already taken steps to make roadside conditions safer for emergency services personnel, and now this adds extra precautions to help protect the safety of people having other kinds of roadside issues such as a breakdown or medical issue that isn’t yet being attended to by emergency personnel.”

Current law requires a person operating a vehicle to change lanes to a non-adjacent lane when approaching an emergency vehicle, roadside assistance vehicle, tow vehicle or ambulance that is stopped and displaying warning lights. If it is not possible to change lanes, the operator must reduce speed by at least 5 miles per hour under the speed limit. The bill passed today expands the law to include all motor vehicles that are stopped and displaying required warning or hazard lights, or when a person is indicating distress by using emergency flares or other posted signs, unless the vehicle is parked in a designated parking area. SB 34 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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