

Article 6D.

Controlled-Access Facilities.

§ 136-89.48. Declaration of policy.

The General Assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this Article is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, the promotion of the general welfare, the improvement and development of transportation facilities in the State, the elimination of hazards at grade intersections, and other related purposes. (1957, c. 993, s. 1.)

§ 136-89.49. Definitions.

When used in this Article:

- (1) "Department" means the Department of Transportation.
- (2) "Controlled-access facility" means a State highway, or section of State highway, especially designed for through traffic, and over, from or to which highway owners or occupants of abutting property, or others, shall have only a controlled right or easement of access.
- (3) "Frontage road" means a way, road or street which is auxiliary to and located on the side of another highway, road or street for service to abutting property and adjacent areas and for the control of access to such other highway, road or street. (1957, c. 993, s. 2; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1.)

§ 136-89.50. Authority to establish controlled-access facilities.

The Department of Transportation may designate, establish, abandon, improve, construct, maintain and regulate controlled-access facilities as a part of the State highway system, National System of Interstate Highways, and Federal Aid Primary System whenever the Department of Transportation determines that traffic conditions, present or future, justify such controlled-access facilities, or the abandonment thereof. (1957, c. 993, s. 3; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1.)

§ 136-89.51. Design of controlled-access facility.

The Department of Transportation is authorized so to design any controlled-access facility and so to regulate, restrict, or prohibit access as best to serve the traffic for which such facility is intended. In this connection the Department of Transportation is authorized to divide and separate any controlled-access facility into separate roadways by the construction of raised curbs, central dividing sections, or other physical separations, or by designating such separate roadways by signs, markers, or stripes, and the proper lane for such traffic by appropriate signs, markers, stripes, and other devices. No person shall have any right of ingress or egress to, from or across controlled-access facilities to or from abutting lands, except at such designated points at which access may be permitted, upon such terms and conditions as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Transportation. (1957, c. 993, s. 4; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1.)

§ 136-89.52. Acquisition of property and property rights.

For the purposes of this Article, the Department of Transportation may acquire private or public property and property rights for controlled-access facilities and service or frontage roads, including rights of access, air, view and light, by gift, devise, purchase, or condemnation in the same manner as now or hereafter authorized by law to acquire such property or property rights in connection with highways. The property rights acquired under the provisions of this Article may be in fee simple or an appropriate easement for right-of-way in perpetuity. In connection with the

acquisition of property or property rights for any controlled-access facility or portion thereof, or frontage road in connection therewith, the Department of Transportation may, in its discretion, with the consent of the landowner, acquire an entire lot, parcel, or tract of land, if by so doing, the interests of the public will be best served, even though said entire lot, parcel, or tract is not immediately needed for the right-of-way proper.

Along new controlled-access highway locations, abutting property owners shall not be entitled to access to such new locations, and no abutter's easement of access to such new locations shall attach to said property. Where part of a tract of land is taken or acquired for the construction of a controlled-access facility on a new location, the nature of the facility constructed on the part taken, including the fact that there shall be no direct access thereto, shall be considered in determining the fair market value of the remaining property immediately after the taking. (1957, c. 993, s. 5; 1969, c. 946; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1.)

§ 136-89.53. New and existing facilities; grade crossing eliminations.

The Department of Transportation may designate and establish controlled-access highways as new and additional facilities or may designate and establish an existing street or highway as included within a controlled-access facility. When an existing street or highway shall be designated as and included within a controlled-access facility the owners of land abutting such existing street or highway shall be entitled to compensation for the taking of or injury to their easements of access. The Department of Transportation shall have authority to provide for the elimination of intersections at grade of controlled-access facilities with existing State highways and county roads, and city and town streets, by grade separation or frontage road, or by closing off such roads and streets, or other public ways at the right-of-way boundary line of such controlled-access facility; and after the establishment of any controlled-access facility, no highway or street which is not part of said facility shall intersect the same at grade. No street or [of] any city or town and no State highway, county road, or other public way shall be opened into or connected with any such controlled-access facility without the consent and previous approval of the Department of Transportation. Such consent and approval shall be given only if the public interest shall be served thereby. (1957, c. 993, s. 6; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1.)

§ 136-89.54. Authority of local units to consent.

The Department of Transportation, as the highway authority of the State, and the governing body of any county, city or town are authorized, after a public hearing to be held in the county affected, to enter into agreements with each other, and the Department of Transportation is authorized to enter into agreements with the federal government, respecting the financing, planning, establishment, improvement, maintenance, use, regulations, or vacation of controlled-access facilities or other public ways in their respective jurisdictions, to facilitate the purposes of this Article. (1957, c. 993, s. 7; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1.)

§ 136-89.55. Local service roads.

In connection with the development of any controlled-access facility the Department of Transportation is authorized to plan, designate, establish, use, regulate, alter, improve, maintain, and vacate local service or frontage roads and streets or to designate as local service or frontage roads and streets any existing road or street, and to exercise jurisdiction over service or frontage roads in the same manner as is authorized over controlled-access facilities under the terms of this Article, if in its opinion such local service or frontage roads and streets are necessary or desirable;

provided, however that after a local service or frontage road has been established, the same shall not be vacated or abandoned in such a manner as to reduce access to the facility without the consent of the abutting property owners or the payment of just compensation, so long as the controlled-access facility is maintained as such facility, and the Department of Transportation shall not have any authority to control or restrict the right of access of abutting property owners from their property to such local service or frontage roads or streets without the property owners' consent or the payment of just compensation, except such authority as the Department of Transportation has with respect to primary and secondary roads under the police power. Such local service or frontage roads or streets shall be of appropriate design, and shall be separated from the controlled-access facility proper by means of all devices designated as necessary or desirable. (1957, c. 993, s. 8; 1969, c. 795; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1.)

§ 136-89.56. Commercial enterprises.

(a) No commercial enterprises or activities shall be authorized or conducted by the Department of Transportation, or the governing body of any city or town, within or on the property acquired for or designated as a controlled-access facility, as defined in this Article, except for:

- (1) Materials displayed at welcome centers which shall be directly related to travel, accommodations, tourist-related activities, tourist-related services, and attractions. The Department of Transportation shall issue rules regulating the display of these materials. These materials may contain advertisements for real estate; and
- (2) Vending machines permitted by the Department of Transportation and placed by the Division of Services for the Blind, Department of Health and Human Services, as the State licensing agency designated pursuant to Section 2(a)(5) of the Randolph-Sheppard Act (20 USC 107a(a)(5)). The Department of Transportation shall regulate the placing of the vending machines in highway rest areas and shall regulate the articles to be dispensed. In order to permit the establishment of adequate fuel and other service facilities by private owners or their lessees for the users of a controlled-access facility, the Department of Transportation shall permit access to service or frontage roads within the publicly owned right-of-way of any controlled-access facility established or designated as provided in this Article, at points which, in the opinion of the Department of Transportation, will best serve the public interest. The location of such fuel and other service facilities may be indicated to the users of the controlled-access facilities by appropriate signs, the size, style, and specifications of which shall be determined by the Department of Transportation.

(b) The location of fuel, gas, food, lodging, camping, and attraction facilities may be indicated to the users of the controlled-access facilities by appropriate logos placed on signs owned, controlled, and erected within the right-of-way of fully and partially controlled-access highways by, or pursuant to contract with, the Department of Transportation. The Department shall contract with a private entity to administer the erection of signs and placement of logos, as authorized by this subsection. The responsibilities of the private entity shall include the following: acquisition and erection of signs; design, manufacture, and placement of logos on signs; maintenance of signs and logos; receipt and response to information requests concerning the program; and management of the financial transactions related to the program. The owners,

operators or lessees of fuel, gas, food, lodging, camping, and attraction facilities who wish to place a logo identifying their business or service on a sign shall furnish a logo meeting the size, style and specifications determined by the Department of Transportation and shall pay a fee set by the vendor and approved by the Board of Transportation. The fee set by the vendor shall be determined based on market rates for the number of vehicles that pass by the sign, reflecting the value of the visibility and access provided to the participating businesses and to cover the initial costs of signs, sign installation, and maintenance, and the costs of administering the logo sign program. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to authorize any Department contractor to conduct any commercial activity upon signs erected and maintained within the right-of-way of fully and partially controlled-access highways pursuant to this subsection. (1957, c. 993, s. 9; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1; 1981, c. 481, s. 1; 1983, c. 604, s. 1; 1985, c. 456; c. 718, ss. 2, 3, 6; 1987, c. 417, s. 2; 1996, 2nd Ex. Sess., c. 18, s. 19.10(b); 1997-443, s. 11A.118(a); 2003-184, s. 2; 2014-100, s. 34.14(a); 2015-239, s. 1; 2024-30, s. 31(a).)

§ 136-89.57. Repealed by Session Laws 1965, c. 474, s. 1.

§ 136-89.58. Unlawful use of National System of Interstate and Defense Highways and other controlled-access facilities.

On those sections of highways which are or become a part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways and other controlled-access facilities it shall be unlawful for any person:

- (1) To drive a vehicle over, upon or across any curb, central dividing section or other separation or dividing line on said highways.
- (2) To make a left turn or a semicircular or U-turn except through an opening provided for that purpose in the dividing curb section, separation, or line on said highways.
- (3) To drive any vehicle except in the proper lane provided for that purpose and in the proper direction and to the right of the central dividing curb, separation section, or line on said highways.
- (4) To drive any vehicle into the main travel lanes or lanes of connecting ramps or interchanges except through an opening or connection provided for that purpose by the Department of Transportation.
- (5) To stop, park, or leave standing any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, on any part or portion of the right-of-way of said highways, except in the case of an emergency or as directed by a peace officer, or as designated parking areas.
- (6) To willfully damage, remove, climb, cross or breach any fence erected within the rights-of-way of said highways.
- (7) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-330, s. 6.

Any person who violates any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. (1959, c. 647; 1965, c. 474, s. 2; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1; c. 731, s. 2; 1993, c. 539, s. 988; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1999-330, s. 6.)

§ 136-89.59. Highway rest area refreshments.

All civic, nonprofit, or charitable corporations and organizations are authorized to serve nonalcoholic refreshments to motorists at rest areas and welcome centers located on control-access facilities in accordance with the following conditions:

- (1) Thirty-day permits shall be issued without cost by the Highway Division Engineer. Permits shall be subject to revocation by the Chief Engineer for violations of this section. The applicant must be a nonprofit organization showing a record of concern for automotive, highway, or driver safety.
- (2) The activity must be carried on solely within the safety rest area free from any ramp or other service used for the movement of vehicles.
- (3) The activity must be conducted for the express purpose of improving the safety of highway travel and the advertisement of any product by any organization shall not be permitted.
- (4) The refreshment and any other service offered must be free of charge to the motorist.
- (5) Signs shall be displayed by the corporation or organization, and the Department of Transportation is hereby authorized to promulgate rules and regulations governing the size, content and location of such signs. (1973, c. 1346; 1977, c. 464, s. 7.1; 1981, c. 545, ss. 1, 2; 2012-85, s. 7.)

§ 136-89.59A. Promotion of North Carolina farm products at rest areas and welcome centers.

Subject to the approval of the Department, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services may distribute promotional materials and free samples of North Carolina farm products at rest areas and welcome centers located on controlled-access facilities and operated by the State for the purpose of promoting North Carolina farm products. (2001-424, s. 17.1.)