

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

H.B. 394
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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH40247-NE-50A

Short Title: Distracted Driving/Children and Animals. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Iler.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT MAKING IT UNLAWFUL TO INTERACT WITH CHILDREN OR ANIMALS IN
AN UNSAFE MANNER WHILE OPERATING A MOTOR VEHICLE ON A PUBLIC
STREET, HIGHWAY, OR PUBLIC VEHICULAR AREA.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Article 3 of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes is amended by adding
a new section to read:

"§ 20-137.4B. Distracted driving caused by interacting with children or animals prohibited.

(a) Prohibited Conduct. – It shall be unlawful for a person to operate a vehicle on a public street, highway, or public vehicular area while (i) holding an animal or allowing an animal to sit in the operator's lap or (ii) interacting with a child or an animal in a manner that impairs or restricts the proper operation of the motor vehicle and results in operation that is careless, reckless, or heedless under the conditions then existing.

(b) Exception. – The provisions of this section shall not apply to fully autonomous vehicles being operated in accordance with Article 18 of this Chapter.

(c) Penalty. – A violation of this section shall be an infraction punishable by a fine of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) and the costs of court. No insurance surcharge shall be assessed as a result of a violation of this section."

SECTION 2. This act becomes effective December 1, 2025, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date. For the six months immediately after the effective date of this act, law enforcement shall only issue warning tickets for offenses committed.

