

Scott H. Chew proposes the following substitute bill:

Tail Light Obstruction Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Scott H. Chew

Senate Sponsor: Kathleen A. Riebe

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill addresses vehicle lighting requirements relating to cargo carriers.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ prohibits operating a motor vehicle when a cargo carrier obscures required tail lights unless auxiliary lighting equipment and reflectors are installed;
- ▶ establishes compliance requirements for operators;
- ▶ provides standards for auxiliary lighting equipment and reflectors; and
- ▶ provides penalties for violations.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

ENACTS:

41-6a-1647, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **41-6a-1647** is enacted to read:

41-6a-1647 . Tail light obstruction prohibited -- Cargo carriers and bicycle racks.

(1) As used in this section:

- (a) "Cargo carrier" means any device attached to a vehicle for the purpose of transporting cargo, luggage, or equipment, including:
 - (i) a hitch-mounted cargo carrier;
 - (ii) a cargo tray; and

- 29 (iii) a cargo basket.
- 30 (b) "Reflector" means a device designed to reflect light from another light source to
31 provide visibility of the device.
- 32 (c) "Tail light" or "tail lamp" means the rear lighting equipment required under Section
33 41-6a-1603.
- 34 (2)(a) Except as provided in Subsection (2)(b), an individual may not operate a vehicle
35 to which a cargo carrier is attached on a highway if the cargo carrier obscures,
36 obstructs, or blocks a required tail light such that the tail light is not clearly visible
37 from a distance of 500 feet to the rear of the vehicle.
- 38 (b) An individual may operate a vehicle as described in Subsection (2)(a) if the
39 individual installs auxiliary lighting equipment and reflectors in accordance with
40 Subsection (3).
- 41 (3)(a) If an individual operates a vehicle on a highway with a cargo carrier that obscures,
42 obstructs, or blocks a tail light, the individual shall install auxiliary lighting
43 equipment and reflectors as described in Subsection (3)(b) and (c).
- 44 (b) An individual required to install auxiliary lighting or reflectors required under
45 Subsection (3)(a) shall:
- 46 (i) mount or attach the auxiliary light onto the cargo carrier;
47 (ii) ensure that the auxiliary lighting:
- 48 (A) is wired to activate simultaneously with the vehicle's standard tail lights and
49 brake lights; and
- 50 (B) is red in color and visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the rear; and
- 51 (iii) meet or exceed the standards established by the Department of Public Safety
52 under Section 41-6a-1601.
- 53 (c) An individual required to install reflectors as described in Subsection (3)(a) shall
54 ensure that the reflectors:
- 55 (i) are red in color;
56 (ii) are visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the rear when illuminated by the
57 headlights of a motor vehicle; and
- 58 (iii) meet or exceed the standards established by the Department of Public Safety
59 under Section 41-6a-1601.
- 60 (4)(a) A violation of this section is an infraction punishable by a fine not to exceed \$100
61 for a first offense.
- 62 (b) A second or subsequent violation within three years is punishable by a fine not to

63 exceed \$200.

64 **Section 2. Effective Date.**

65 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.