



HOUSE BILL 394: Distracted Driving/Children and Animals.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Transportation. If favorable, re-refer to Judiciary 1. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	March 26, 2025
Introduced by:	Rep. Iler	Prepared by:	Wendy Ray
Analysis of:	First Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 394 would prohibit operating a motor vehicle while either:*

- *Holding an animal or having an animal in the operator's lap; or*
- *Interacting with a child or animal in a manner that results in careless, reckless, or heedless operation of the vehicle.*

CURRENT LAW: North Carolina does not currently have a statutory prohibition on operating a vehicle while holding an animal or interacting with an animal or child in a manner that impairs proper operation of a vehicle. Other traffic offenses may apply if a distraction causes a driver to operate the vehicle in an unsafe manner.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 394 would prohibit operating a motor vehicle on a public highway or public vehicular area while either:

- Holding an animal or allowing an animal to sit in the operator's lap; or
- Interacting with a child or animal in a manner that impairs proper operation of the vehicle and results in careless, reckless, or heedless operation under existing conditions.

A violation of the prohibition would be an infraction, punishable by a fine of \$100 and court costs. No insurance points would be assessed.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The act would become effective December 1, 2025, and would apply to offenses committed on or after that date. However, for the first six months after the effective date of the act, law enforcement would be required to issue warning tickets only for violations.

Kara McCraw
Director



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Legislative Analysis
Division
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