The Florida Senate

BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Transportation

BILL:	SB 1502
INTRODUCER:	Senator Collins
SUBJECT:	Special Mobile Equipment
DATE:	March 18, 2025
REVISED:	

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Johnson	Vickers	TR	**Pre-meeting**
2.			CA	
3.			RC	

I. Summary:

SB 1502 authorizes the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to issue a mobile crane special blanket permit authorizing a mobile crane to operate on or off the Interstate Highway System:

- While towing motor vehicles under a certain weight;
- At all hours, except as restricted under a curfew; or
- In excess of statutorily established weight limits.

The bill also revises the statutory definition of the term "special mobile equipment" to incorporate mobile cranes and accessory support vehicles into that definition.

This bill may have a positive fiscal impact on FDOT associated with permit fees for mobile crane special blanket permits. *See* Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement for details.

This bill takes effect July 1, 2025.

II. Present Situation:

Special Mobile Equipment

Florida law defines the term "special mobile equipment" to mean any vehicle not designed or used primarily for the transportation of persons or property and only incidentally operated or moved over a highway.[1]

Special mobile equipment includes, but is not limited to, ditchdigging apparatus, well-boring apparatus, and road construction and maintenance machinery, such as asphalt spreaders,

[1] Section 316.003(83). F.S.

bituminous mixers, bucket loaders, tractors other than truck tractors, ditchers, leveling graders, finishing machines, motor graders, road rollers, scarifiers, earthmoving carryalls and scrapers, power shovels and draglines, and self-propelled cranes and earthmoving equipment.[2]

Special mobile equipment does not include house trailers, dump trucks, truck-mounted transit mixers, cranes or shovels, or other vehicles designed for the transportation of persons or property to which machinery has been attached.[3]

Special Permits for Oversize or Overweight Vehicles

Florida law prohibits oversize or overweight vehicles or loads from entering onto or operating on a public road unless the vehicle's owner or operator has first obtained a special permit for such movement from the appropriate governing jurisdiction.[4]

Florida's statutory limits for the width, height, length, and weight of vehicle, including the load, on its roadways are:

- Width - 102 inches; however, the use of certain roads may be restricted due to safety concerns.[5]
- Height - 13 feet six inches.[6]
- Length – 40 feet for a straight truck, 48 feet for a semi-trailer, and 28 fee for tandem trailer trucks.[7]
- Weight – 80,000, including enforcement tolerances.[8]

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) or a local authority may, with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions, issue a special permit authorizing an applicant to operate or move a vehicle or combination of vehicles of an excess size or weight upon any highway under its jurisdiction.[9]

The permit must describe the vehicle or vehicles and load to be operated or moved and the highways for which the permit is requested. FDOT or local authority, may at its discretion, issue or withhold a permit. If a permit is issued, FDOT or local authority, may limit or prescribe the conditions of operation of such vehicle or vehicles.[10]

Such a permit may authorize a self-propelled truck crane operating off the Interstate Highway System to tow a motor vehicle which does not weigh more than 5,000 pounds, if the combined weight of the crane and such motor vehicle does not exceed 95,000 pounds.[11]

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[2] *Id.*
[3] *Id.*
[4] Section 316.550(1), F.S.
[5] Section 316.515(1), F.S.
[6] Section 316.515(2), F.S.
[7] Section 316.515(3), F.S.
[8] Section 316.515, F.S., maximum weight limits are set by formula, but the vehicle's overall gross vehicle weight may not exceed 80,000 points, including enforcement tolerances.
[9] Section 316.550(2), F.S.
[10] *Id.*
[11] Section 316.550(3), F.S.

FDOT Permit Rules – Overweight and Overdimensional Vehicles

Pursuant to its overweight and overdimensional permit rules,[12] FDOT, when evaluating permit requests and prescribing permit conditions, must consider:

- Whether the load can be reasonably dismantled or disassembled;
- Protection of the motoring public from traffic hazards;
- Prevention of undue delays in the normal flow of traffic;
- Prevention of damage to the highway pavement, facilities, and structures;
- Assistance needed for transportation problems involving excess size or weight;
- Whether the vehicle meet FDOT's established axle load and axle spacing requirements of the bridge structures to be crossed;
- Temporary conditions such as construction;
- The applicant's survey letter indicating available vertical clearance on the proposed route for all loads/vehicles over 18 feet high;
- The applicant's survey letter indicating available horizontal clearance on the proposed route for all loads/vehicles over 22 feet wide;
- The applicant's previous permit compliance history;
- Other items which affect traffic flow or safety;
- All details relevant to the proposed move as presented by the applicant and as requested by FDOT.[13]

For nighttime movement, when FDOT's criteria for issuing a permit are met, FDOT must issue a permit provided that:

- Nighttime travel is recommended by the appropriate FDOT District Traffic Engineering Offices or determined to be a permit requirement.
- Law enforcement escorts are used.
- Warning lights delineate the load's shape and size.
- The sides and rear of trailers and loads are as prescribed in state law and federal regulations.[14]

For self-propelled equipment,[15] including cranes, FDOT requires a trip or multi-trip permit to be issued when specified criteria is met. For all self-propelled equipment, the boom must be fully retracted. For nighttime movement, front overhang must have a minimum of 80 inches clearance above the roadway. In addition, the following restrictions apply:

- Total length up to 80 feet.
    - Front Overhang over six feet up to nine feet. Movement is permitted on all days, all hours. A warning light is required to be mounted at the extreme end of the protrusion in such a way as to be seen by all approaching traffic.

[12] Rule 14-26, F.A.C.
[13] Rule 14-26.00425, F.A.C.
[14] Rule 14-26.012(5)(f), F.A.C.
[15] Rule 14-26.0041(27), F.A.C., defines the term "self-propelled equipment" to mean a single rigid frame unit propelled with its own power source which does not transport a divisible load, and includes equipment such as earth handling equipment, cranes (which may include a dolly attachment), derricks and fire trucks.

- Front Overhang over nine feet. Movement is permitted on all days, during daytime hours only. A warning light is required to be mounted at the extreme end of the protrusion in such a way as to be seen by all approaching traffic.

- Total Length over 80 feet. Movement is permitted daytime hours only, excluding holidays. Flags and warning signs are required. A warning light is required to be mounted at the extreme end of the protrusion in such a way as to be seen by all approaching traffic.[16]

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill amends the statutory definition of "special mobile equipment" changing the term "self-propelled cranes" to "mobile cranes and accessory support vehicles." The bill also removes "cranes or shovels" from the list of items that term "special mobile equipment" does not include.

The bill authorizes FDOT to issue a mobile crane special blanket permit for any of the following purposes:

- To authorize a mobile crane to operate on and off the Interstate Highway System while towing a motor vehicle that does not weigh more than 5,000 pounds of the combined weight of the motor vehicle does not exceed 95,000 pounds;
- To authorize a mobile crane and accessory support vehicles that are up to 12 feet in width, 14 feet six inches in height, and 100 feet in length to operate on and off the Interstate Highway System at all hours except as restricted under a curfew; or
- To authorize a mobile crane and accessory support vehicle which, due to the vehicles' design for special use, are in excess of the statutory weight limits[17] to operate on and off the Interstate Highway System.

This bill takes effect July 1, 2025.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

[16] Rule 14-26.012(9)(c), F.A.C.
[17] These weight limits are established in s. 316.535, F.S.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Entities wishing to move mobile cranes and accessory support vehicles may see a reduction in costs due to the ability to move them at all hours.

C. Government Sector Impact:

FDOT may be required to update its overweight and overdimensional vehicle permit rules and permit applications to incorporate provisions in the bill.

FDOT may see an increase in revenues from the issuance of mobile crane special blanket permits. FDOT is authorized to charge permit fees for overweight and overdimensional vehicle permits.[18] These fees vary based on the size of the vehicle and permit type (trip, multi-trip, or route-specific multi-trip).[19]

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 316.003 and 316.550.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

[18] Section 316.550(6), F.S.
[19] Rule 14-26.008, F.S., provides FDOT's fee schedule for these permits.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.