The Senate Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1080.

As reported by the committee, this bill establishes a restricted use driver’s license endorsement to a basic driver’s license for drivers whose licenses have been suspended or revoked for failure to pay certain motor vehicle surcharges or an accumulation of motor vehicle penalty points.

The bill authorizes a driver with a restricted use driver’s license endorsement to operate a motor vehicle exclusively between the driver’s residence and place of employment, as well as during the person’s employment if necessary to perform his or her duties; an accredited educational institution; a mandated treatment program; a health care facility; or a child care facility.

Drivers may apply for the endorsement if their driver’s licenses have been suspended or revoked for failure to pay motor vehicle surcharges and they agree to a payment plan approved by the chief administrator, or for an accumulation of motor vehicle penalty points, but only if they attend a driver improvement program. A person who has been convicted of drunk driving or refusing to take a breathalyzer test or has been assessed surcharges resulting from those convictions would not be eligible for an endorsement under the bill.

The bill requires the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) to develop and issue an application for the restricted use driver’s license endorsement and to promptly issue the endorsement to applicants. If an applicant for an endorsement provides false information on the application, the applicant’s driver’s license is to be suspended or revoked for an additional year. The chief administrator may charge a fee of up to $25 for the endorsement. The endorsement is to expire when the person’s driver’s license is restored following the period of suspension or revocation.

The bill also establishes penalties for operating a motor vehicle between points other than those authorized by the endorsement. The endorsement is to be immediately forfeited and the driver is subject to a fine of not less than $500 or more than $1,000; community service for a period of 30 days; and an additional one-year driver’s license suspension or revocation. A driver who is...
convicted of causing an accident resulting in personal injury or death to another person while driving between unauthorized points is subject to a fine of between $1,000 and $5,000; community service for a period of 30 days; and an additional two-year driver’s license suspension or revocation. A driver who is convicted of drunk driving or refusing to take a breathalyzer while operating a motor vehicle between unauthorized points is subject to a fine of between $1,000 and $5,000 and an additional five-year driver’s license suspension or revocation.

Under the bill, a person whose driver’s license is suspended or revoked after or within 10 years of the effective date of the bill would be eligible for an endorsement, provided the person meets the requirements set forth in the bill.