

## § 5125. Preemption

### How Current is This?

**(a) General.—** Except as provided in subsections (b), (c), and (e) of this section and unless authorized by another law of the United States, a requirement of a State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian tribe is preempted if—

**(1)** complying with a requirement of the State, political subdivision, or tribe and a requirement of this chapter, a regulation prescribed under this chapter, or a hazardous materials transportation security regulation or directive issued by the Secretary of Homeland Security is not possible; or

**(2)** the requirement of the State, political subdivision, or tribe, as applied or enforced, is an obstacle to accomplishing and carrying out this chapter, a regulation prescribed under this chapter, or a hazardous materials transportation security regulation or directive issued by the Secretary of Homeland Security.

**(b) Substantive Differences.—**

**(1)** Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section and unless authorized by another law of the United States, a law, regulation, order, or other requirement of a State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian tribe about any of the following subjects, that is not substantively the same as a provision of this chapter, a regulation prescribed under this chapter, or a hazardous materials transportation security regulation or directive issued by the Secretary of Homeland Security, is preempted:

**(A)** the designation, description, and classification of hazardous material.

**(B)** the packing, repacking, handling, labeling, marking, and placarding of hazardous material.

**(C)** the preparation, execution, and use of shipping documents related to hazardous material and requirements related to the number, contents, and placement of those documents.

**(D)** the written notification, recording, and reporting of the unintentional release in transportation of hazardous material.

**(E)** the design, manufacturing, fabricating, marking, maintenance, reconditioning, repairing, or testing of a packaging or a container represented, marked, certified, or sold as qualified for use in transporting hazardous material.

**(2)** If the Secretary of Transportation prescribes or has prescribed under section 5103 (b), 5104, 5110, or 5112 of this title or prior comparable provision of law a regulation or standard related to a subject referred to in paragraph (1) of this subsection, a State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian tribe may prescribe, issue, maintain, and enforce only a law, regulation, standard, or order about the subject that is substantively the same as a provision of this chapter or a regulation prescribed or order issued under this chapter. The Secretary shall decide on and publish in the Federal Register the effective date of section 5103 (b) of this title for any regulation or standard about any of those subjects that the Secretary prescribes after November 16, 1990. However, the effective date may not be earlier than 90 days after the Secretary prescribes the regulation or standard nor later than the last day of the 2-year period beginning on the date the Secretary prescribes the regulation or standard.

**(3)** If a State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian tribe imposes a fine or penalty the Secretary decides is appropriate for a violation related to a subject referred to in paragraph

(1) of this subsection, an additional fine or penalty may not be imposed by any other authority.

**(c) Compliance With Section 5112(b) Regulations.**—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, after the last day of the 2-year period beginning on the date a regulation is prescribed under section 5112 (b) of this title, a State or Indian tribe may establish, maintain, or enforce a highway routing designation over which hazardous material may or may not be transported by motor vehicles, or a limitation or requirement related to highway routing, only if the designation, limitation, or requirement complies with section 5112 (b).

**(2)**

**(A)** A highway routing designation, limitation, or requirement established before the date a regulation is prescribed under section 5112 (b) of this title does not have to comply with section 5112 (b)(1)(B), (C), and (F).

**(B)** This subsection and section 5112 of this title do not require a State or Indian tribe to comply with section 5112 (b)(1)(I) if the highway routing designation, limitation, or requirement was established before November 16, 1990.

**(C)** The Secretary may allow a highway routing designation, limitation, or requirement to continue in effect until a dispute related to the designation, limitation, or requirement is resolved under section 5112 (d) of this title.

**(d) Decisions on Preemption.—**

**(1)** A person (including a State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian tribe) directly affected by a requirement of a State, political subdivision, or tribe may apply to the Secretary, as provided by regulations prescribed by the Secretary, for a decision on whether the requirement is preempted by subsection (a), (b)(1), or (c) of this section. The Secretary shall publish notice of the application in the Federal Register. The Secretary shall issue a decision on an application for a determination within 180 days after the date of the publication of the notice of having received such application, or the Secretary shall publish a statement in the Federal Register of the reason why the Secretary's decision on the application is delayed, along with an estimate of the additional time necessary before the decision is made. After notice is published, an applicant may not seek judicial relief on the same or substantially the same issue until the Secretary takes final action on the application or until 180 days after the application is filed, whichever occurs first.

**(2)** After consulting with States, political subdivisions of States, and Indian tribes, the Secretary shall prescribe regulations for carrying out paragraph (1) of this subsection.

**(3)** Subsection (a) of this section does not prevent a State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian tribe, or another person directly affected by a requirement, from seeking a decision on preemption from a court of competent jurisdiction instead of applying to the Secretary under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

**(e) Waiver of Preemption.—** A State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian tribe may apply to the Secretary for a waiver of preemption of a requirement the State, political subdivision, or tribe acknowledges is preempted by subsection (a), (b)(1), or (c) of this section. Under a procedure the Secretary prescribes by regulation, the Secretary may waive preemption on deciding the requirement—

**(1)** provides the public at least as much protection as do requirements of this chapter and regulations prescribed under this chapter; and

**(2)** is not an unreasonable burden on commerce.

**(f) Judicial Review.**— A party to a proceeding under subsection (d) or (e) of this section may bring a civil action in an appropriate district court of the United States for judicial review of the decision of the Secretary not later than 60 days after the decision becomes final.

**(g) Fees.**—

**(1)** A State, political subdivision of a State, or Indian tribe may impose a fee related to transporting hazardous material only if the fee is fair and used for a purpose related to transporting hazardous material, including enforcement and planning, developing, and maintaining a capability for emergency response.

**(2)** A State or political subdivision thereof or Indian tribe that levies a fee in connection with the transportation of hazardous materials shall, upon the Secretary's request, report to the Secretary on—

**(A)** the basis on which the fee is levied upon persons involved in such transportation;

**(B)** the purposes for which the revenues from the fee are used;

**(C)** the annual total amount of the revenues collected from the fee; and

**(D)** such other matters as the Secretary requests.