

---

By: **Delegates Arnick and Malone**  
Introduced and read first time: February 1, 2005  
Assigned to: Environmental Matters

---

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments  
House action: Adopted  
Read second time: March 8, 2005

---

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Transportation - Vehicle Laws - Maximum Vehicle Width and Length**

3 FOR the purpose of providing for the calculation of the width of a motor home or  
4 travel trailer; authorizing the State Highway Administration and local  
5 authorities to restrict the width of vehicles traveling on certain highways in  
6 their jurisdiction under certain circumstances; requiring the State Highway  
7 Administration and local authorities to post certain signs if the width of vehicles  
8 is limited; increasing the maximum length of a ~~publicly owned rigid~~ bus or Class  
9 M motor home when operated on certain highways or routes; increasing the  
10 maximum length of a certain maxi-cube vehicle; and generally relating to  
11 vehicle laws and maximum vehicle widths and lengths.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
13 Article - Transportation  
14 Section 24-102 and 24-104.1  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2004 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
18 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article - Transportation**

20 24-102.

21 (a) (1) [For] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS  
22 SUBSECTION, FOR purposes of this section, the width of a vehicle includes any load  
23 that it carries and shall be exclusive of safety and energy conservation devices, such

1 as side mirrors, turn signal lamps, marker lamps, steps and handholds for entry and  
2 egress, flexible fender extensions, mudflaps and spray suppressant devices, and  
3 load-induced tire bulges; providing the equipment or device, other than mirrors, does  
4 not extend more than 3 inches on each side of the vehicle beyond the statutory width  
5 limitation.

6 (2) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, THE WIDTH OF A MOTOR HOME OR  
7 TRAVEL TRAILER SHALL BE EXCLUSIVE OF RETRACTABLE AWNINGS INSTALLED BY  
8 THE VEHICLE MANUFACTURER OR DEALER, PROVIDED THAT THE AWNINGS DO NOT  
9 EXTEND MORE THAN 6 INCHES FROM EACH SIDE OF THE VEHICLE.

10 (b) This section does not apply to any:

11 (1) Farm equipment;

12 (2) Vehicle transporting farm equipment; or

13 (3) Vehicle carrying a load of forage crops in connection with harvesting  
14 operations, if the distance traveled with the load on the highways in this State is less  
15 than 5 miles.

16 (c) (1) [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION,  
17 A vehicle may not be driven on any highway if the width of the vehicle exceeds [the  
18 limits specified in this subsection] 102 INCHES unless:

19 (i) It has a permit issued by the State Highway Administration  
20 under § 24-112 of this subtitle; or

21 (ii) As to a highway under the jurisdiction of a local authority, it has  
22 special permission from the local authority.

23 [(2) For a motor vehicle loaded with tobacco hogsheads or sod, the width  
24 limit is 102 inches.

25 (3) For a bus, motor home, or travel trailer on any highway that is part of  
26 the interstate system or State primary system or for a publicly owned transit bus, the  
27 width limit is 102 inches.

28 (4) For a truck or combination of vehicles, the width limit is 102 inches,  
29 provided that:

30 (i) It is being operated on any part of the interstate system or other  
31 State system highways that are designated by the Secretary in conjunction with the  
32 U.S. Department of Transportation; or

33 (ii) It is being operated on a highway that:

34 1. Is the shortest practical route between a designated  
35 highway and a truck terminal, a point of origin/destination for cargo, or for a distance  
36 not to exceed 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel, repairs, or rest; or

1   2.           Is the safest practical route and is a State highway with 4  
2 or more lanes.

3                     (5)           For any other vehicle, the width limit is 96 inches.

4           (d)           By ordinance, a municipal corporation or Baltimore City may permit the  
5 operation in its jurisdiction of any bus that is not over 102 inches wide.]

6                     (2)           (I)           NOTWITHSTANDING PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE  
7 STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION OR A LOCAL AUTHORITY MAY PROHIBIT THE USE  
8 OF A HIGHWAY OR PART OF A HIGHWAY UNDER ITS JURISDICTION BY A VEHICLE  
9 EXCEEDING A CERTAIN WIDTH IF IT FINDS THAT A VEHICLE EXCEEDING A CERTAIN  
10 WIDTH LIKELY WOULD:

- 11   1.           ENDANGER ROAD USERS;  
12   2.           CAUSE EXCESSIVE DETERIORATION TO THE HIGHWAY; OR  
13   3.           HARM PROPERTY ADJACENT TO THE HIGHWAY.

14   (II)          IF THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION OR A LOCAL  
15 AUTHORITY IMPOSES A VEHICLE WIDTH RESTRICTION UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF  
16 THIS SUBSECTION, IT SHALL PLACE AND MAINTAIN A SIGN PROVIDING NOTICE OF  
17 THE RESTRICTION BEFORE THE AFFECTED LOCATION.

18 24-104.1.

19           (a)           (1)           In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

20                     (2)           "Automobiles" means all assembled motor vehicles:

- 21   (i)           Capable of being operated on a highway; and  
22   (ii)          Authorized under this article to be operated on a highway.

23                     (3)           "Saddle-mount and full-mount combinations" means a truck tractor  
24 or unloaded truck towing 1 or more other truck tractors or unloaded trucks in  
25 combination.

26                     (4)           "Maxi-cube vehicle" means a nonarticulating straight truck:

- 27   (i)           In combination with a semitrailer which does not exceed 34 feet,  
28 and is designed to be loaded and unloaded through the semitrailer; or  
29   (ii)          In combination with a trailer that does not exceed 28 feet.

30                     (5)           "Stinger-steered automobile transporter" means a truck tractor and  
31 semitrailer combination:

- 32   (i)           Designed for and engaged exclusively in the transportation of  
33 automobiles or boats; and

1 (ii) In which the fifth wheel is located on a drop frame behind and  
2 below the rear axle of the power unit.

3 (b) (1) For purposes of this section, the length of a vehicle includes its front  
4 and rear bumpers and any part of its load that extends beyond the vehicle, but is  
5 exclusive of nonload bearing safety and energy conservation devices, such as marker  
6 lamps, steps and handholds for entry and egress, front-mounted refrigeration units,  
7 and front-mounted air compressors.

8 (2) The measurement of a combination of vehicles engaged in the  
9 transportation of automobiles or boats shall not include the overhang of the  
10 transported vehicles or boats or any retractable device on the rear of the combination  
11 when in use to support a transported vehicle.

12 (c) (1) This section does not apply to any vehicle or combination of vehicles  
13 carrying:

14 (i) Piling, poles, or mill logs; or

15 (ii) Crew or racing shells.

16 (2) This section does not prohibit the use of a combination of vehicles to  
17 carry an indivisible load if the load is not over 70 feet long.

18 (d) ~~Except as otherwise provided in this section, a bus, a single unit truck, or~~  
19 ~~a Class M motor home may not be over 40 feet long.~~

20 (e) (1) ~~Except as otherwise provided in this section, a publicly owned rigid~~  
21 ~~bus may not be over 41 feet long.~~

22 (2) ~~The length of a [bus on any highway that is part of the interstate~~  
23 ~~system or State primary system may not exceed 45 feet.] BUS, OTHER THAN A~~  
24 ~~PUBLICLY OWNED RIGID BUS OR A CLASS M MOTOR HOME MAY NOT EXCEED 45 FEET~~  
25 ~~BUT MAY EXCEED 40 FEET IF IT IS BEING OPERATED ON:~~

26 (I) ~~ANY PART OF THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM OR THE~~  
27 ~~STATE PRIMARY SYSTEM; OR~~

28 (II) ~~THE SHORTEST PRACTICAL ROUTE BETWEEN AN INTERSTATE~~  
29 ~~HIGHWAY OR A STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAY AND:~~

30 1. ~~ITS POINT OF ORIGIN OR DESTINATION FOR A~~  
31 ~~PARTICULAR DAY; OR~~

32 2. ~~FOR A DISTANCE NOT TO EXCEED 1 MILE, FACILITIES FOR~~  
33 ~~FOOD, FUEL, REPAIRS, OR REST.~~

34 (D) EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN THIS SECTION:

35 (1) A BUS, SINGLE UNIT TRUCK, OR CLASS M MOTOR HOME MAY NOT BE  
36 OVER 40 FEET LONG; AND

1           (2)     A PUBLICLY OWNED RIGID BUS MAY NOT BE OVER 41 FEET LONG.

2     (E)     (1)     THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO A PUBLICLY OWNED RIGID  
3 BUS.

4           (2)     A BUS OR A CLASS M MOTOR HOME MAY BE OVER 40 FEET LONG BUT  
5 MAY NOT BE OVER 45 FEET LONG:

6                   (I)     WHEN OPERATED ON AN INTERSTATE HIGHWAY OR ANY PART  
7 OF THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY IN  
8 CONJUNCTION WITH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION; OR

9                   (II)    WHEN OPERATED ON A HIGHWAY THAT IS NOT SPECIFIED IN  
10 ITEM (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH IF THE BUS OR MOTOR HOME IS USING THE HIGHWAY  
11 TO TRAVEL THE SHORTEST PRACTICAL ROUTE BETWEEN A HIGHWAY SPECIFIED IN  
12 ITEM (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH AND:

13                           1.     THE POINT OF ORIGIN OR DESTINATION OF THE BUS OR  
14 MOTOR HOME ON A PARTICULAR DAY;

15                           2.     A BUS TERMINAL; OR

16                           3.     FOR A DISTANCE NOT TO EXCEED 1 MILE. FACILITIES FOR  
17 FOOD, FUEL, REPAIRS, OR REST.

18     (f)     Except as otherwise provided in this section, a publicly owned articulated  
19 three-axle bus may not be over 60 feet long.

20     (g)     Any other vehicle may not exceed a length of 35 feet.

21     (h)     When a semitrailer and a trailer (double) are being operated in  
22 combination with a truck tractor, the combination of vehicles shall not be subject to  
23 an overall length limitation. This combination may only be operated on any part of  
24 the interstate system or other State system highways that are designated by the  
25 Secretary in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Transportation, or on a  
26 highway that is the shortest practical route between a designated highway and a  
27 truck terminal, or point of origin/destination for cargo, or for a distance not to exceed  
28 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel, repairs, or rest. A semitrailer or trailer being operated  
29 in this combination may not exceed 28 feet in length for each unit.

30     (i)     When a semitrailer (single) is being operated in combination with a truck  
31 tractor, the combination of vehicles shall not be subject to an overall length limit,  
32 however, the semitrailer may not exceed 48 feet in length.

33     (j)     Except as otherwise provided in this section:

34           (1)     In a combination of vehicles with a power unit that is a  
35 cargo-carrying vehicle, the overall length of the combination may not exceed 62 feet;

36           (2)     Any other combination of vehicles may not exceed 55 feet; and

1 (3) (i) 1. A truck or truck tractor and semitrailer combination  
 2 designed for and engaged exclusively in the transportation of automobiles or boats  
 3 may not exceed 65 feet in length;

4 2. A stinger-steered automobile transporter or a  
 5 saddle-mount or a full-mount combination may not exceed 75 feet in length; and

6 3. A. A maxi-cube vehicle described in subsection (a)(4)(i)  
 7 of this section may not exceed 65 feet in length; and

8 B. A maxi-cube vehicle described in subsection (a)(4)(ii) of  
 9 this section may not exceed 60 feet in length;

10 (ii) No other length requirements may be applied to the  
 11 combinations of vehicles described in item (i) of this paragraph; and

12 (iii) The combinations of vehicles described in item (i) of this  
 13 paragraph may only be operated on any part of the interstate system or other State  
 14 system highways that are designated by the Secretary in conjunction with the U.S.  
 15 Department of Transportation, or on a highway that is the shortest practical route  
 16 between a designated highway and:

17 1. A truck terminal;

18 2. A point of origin/destination for cargo; or

19 3. For a distance not to exceed 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel,  
 20 repairs, or rest.

21 (j-1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (j) of this section, when a  
 22 semitrailer is being operated in combination with a power unit that is equipped with  
 23 a dromedary box being used to transport explosives and munitions classified under 49  
 24 C.F.R. Part 173.50 that are intended for use by the United States Department of  
 25 Defense, the combination of vehicles is not subject to an overall length limit, but the  
 26 semitrailer may not exceed 48 feet in length.

27 (k) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (h) of this section,  
 28 nothing shall prevent the operation of a combination of vehicles in which the  
 29 semitrailer (single) does not exceed 48 1/2 feet in length or a combination of vehicles in  
 30 which the semitrailer or trailer (double) does not exceed 28 1/2 feet in length for each  
 31 unit; provided, the combination has been lawfully operated on the highways of this  
 32 State prior to December 1, 1982.

33 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (j)(1) of this section,  
 34 nothing shall prevent a power unit, which was equipped with a dromedary box, deck,  
 35 or plate and was legally operated in Maryland prior to December 1, 1982, in  
 36 combination with a semitrailer or trailer from exceeding the overall length limit of 55  
 37 feet.

38 (l) (1) In this subsection, "vehicle" means:

1 (i) A semitrailer as defined in § 11-158 of this article; or

2 (ii) A trailer as defined in § 11-169 of this article.

3 (2) Notwithstanding the overall length of the combination, a truck  
4 tractor may not be operated on a highway in the State in combination with more than  
5 2 vehicles.

6 (m) (1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, a combination of  
7 noncommercial vehicles consisting of a power unit and a travel trailer may not exceed  
8 [60] 65 feet in length.

9 (2) The combination of vehicles exceeding 55 feet but authorized under  
10 this subsection may only be operated on:

11 (i) Any part of the interstate system or other State system  
12 highways that are designated by the Secretary in conjunction with the U.S.  
13 Department of Transportation; or

14 (ii) A highway that is the shortest practical route between a  
15 designated highway and:

16 1. A point of origin or destination on a particular day; or

17 2. For a distance not to exceed 1 mile, facilities for food, fuel,  
18 repairs, or rest.

19 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
20 October 1, 2005.