

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2009 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

Senate Bill 431

(Senator Greenip)

Judicial Proceedings

Environmental Matters

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**Vehicle Laws - School Buses - Paint Standards**

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This bill clarifies that school vehicles must be painted National School Bus Yellow and any other color authorized or required by Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) regulations. With the advice of the Maryland State Department of Education, MVA must adopt and enforce construction standards and product specifications for all school vehicles. Regulations adopted and enforced by MVA may not be inconsistent with federal law.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill codifies existing practice.

**Local Effect:** None. The bill codifies existing practice.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** School vehicles must be painted National School Bus Yellow. Regulations adopted and enforced by MVA may not be inconsistent with Maryland Vehicle Law.

Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) provisions require school vehicles to have glossy black rub rails, seat line, and snow rails, and allows the roofs to be painted white.

COMAR provisions also require MVA to provide oversight of the construction standards and specifications.

**Background:** National School Bus Yellow was selected as the standard school bus color at a 1939 conference because it was determined to be the easiest color to read black lettering on in the semi-darkness of early morning and late afternoon.

Current law may be interpreted to require entire school vehicles to be painted only National School Bus Yellow, even though current COMAR provisions require school vehicles to have glossy black rub rails, seat line, and snow rails, and allow the roofs to be painted white. Likewise, it may be unclear whether MVA is authorized to provide oversight of the construction standards and specifications as outlined in COMAR. The bill codifies current practice.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Association of Boards of Education, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 18, 2009  
ncs/mwc Revised - Senate Third Reader - March 26, 2009

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