

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 1016

(Senator Conway, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

Baltimore City - Vehicle Laws - Parking Restrictions

This bill authorizes the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City to adopt an ordinance or regulation to authorize, in designated neighborhoods, a person to stop, stand, or park a vehicle on a sidewalk, or to stop or park a vehicle parallel to the *left* curb or edge of a two-way roadway with the vehicle's *left* wheels within 12 inches of the curb or edge of the roadway.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2012.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: Baltimore City revenues may decrease to the extent that the bill results in the collection of fewer fines related to stopping, standing, or parking on a sidewalk or stopping or parking with a vehicle's left wheels against the left curb of a two-way roadway. Baltimore City expenditures increase, potentially significantly in future years, to the extent that sidewalk-related costs increase for the Baltimore City Department of Transportation. Baltimore City Police Department workloads may also increase to respond to additional vehicle accidents caused by vehicles parked against the flow of traffic.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: The Maryland Vehicle Law governs the stopping, standing, and parking of vehicles, with various restrictions applicable under certain circumstances or within certain jurisdictions. A local authority, in the reasonable exercise of its police power, may also regulate or prohibit the stopping, standing, or parking of vehicles on highways within its jurisdiction.

A person may not stop, stand, or park a vehicle on a sidewalk. In addition, a vehicle that is stopped or parked on a two-way roadway must be stopped or parked parallel to the *right* hand curb or edge of the roadway, with its *right* wheels within 12 inches of the curb or edge of the roadway (same direction as the flow of traffic).

Generally, a violation of the Maryland Vehicle Law is a misdemeanor (unless specifically declared a felony or administrative infraction) that carries a fine of up to \$500. The amount of the prepayable fine for a violation of most provisions regulating stopping, standing, or parking is \$50, \$60, or \$70, depending on the specific violation. The specific prepayable fine for parking a vehicle on a sidewalk is \$60, while the fine for failing to park adjacent to the curb properly is \$50.

Background: The Baltimore City Parking Authority was created by City Ordinance 2000-71 to enhance Baltimore City's position in planning, development, management and operations of its parking institutions. The mission of the parking authority is to find, create, and implement parking solutions for Baltimore City and to be the resource on all things parking in Baltimore. According to Baltimore City data, nearly 2.1 million parking citations have been issued since May 13, 2010, and 11,310 parking-related complaints have been received by the city since January 1, 2010. The data reflect overall parking-related citations and complaints and are not specific to the stopping, standing, and parking provisions addressed by the bill.

Local Expenditures: In Baltimore City, sidewalk repair is generally the responsibility of the resident adjacent to whose property the sidewalk is located. However, it is unclear whether residents in neighborhoods affected by the bill's authorization to park on sidewalks will be required to pay for sidewalk repairs or replacements necessitated by damage from parked cars. To the extent that residents are relieved of the responsibility of addressing damaged sidewalks, expenditures may increase for the Baltimore City Department of Transportation, which oversees city sidewalks. Further, costs of constructing new sidewalks may increase in the future to ensure that sidewalks are constructed to withstand the additional damage caused by parked cars.

Baltimore City has estimated that the average societal cost of responding to a vehicle crash is about \$3,500 per incident. However, it is unclear what portion of this cost is

attributable to the budget of Baltimore City or how this cost is apportioned among the city's various agencies. Further, a reliable estimate cannot be made as to how many additional vehicle crashes may occur each year under the bill's authorization to park against the flow of traffic on two-way roads. In any event, Baltimore City Police Department workloads may increase to respond to additional accidents.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City, Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 19, 2012
ncs/ljm

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