

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1053 (Charles County Delegation)
Environmental Matters

Charles County - Red Light Violations - Civil Penalties - Late Payment Fee

This bill authorizes Charles County, or any municipal corporation within the county, to charge a fee to a person who pays an uncontested fine generated by a traffic control signal monitoring system after the deadline specified in the citation, to cover the administrative costs associated with processing late payments.

Fiscal Summary

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

Local Effect: None. The bill codifies current practice.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Unless the driver of a motor vehicle receives a citation from a police officer at the time of the violation, the owner or driver of the vehicle that is recorded by a traffic control signal monitoring system entering an intersection against a red signal indication in violation of the Maryland Vehicle Law is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$100; Charles County currently imposes a fine of \$75 in uncontested cases. If the civil penalty is not paid and the violation is not contested, the Motor Vehicle Administration may refuse to register or reregister, or may suspend, the registration of the motor vehicle. Current law does not explicitly authorize a late fee to be charged.

Background: The State and local governments are authorized to operate traffic control signal monitoring systems on any roads or highways in the State. A “traffic control

signal monitoring system” is a device with one or more motor vehicle sensors working in conjunction with a traffic control signal to produce recorded images of motor vehicles entering an intersection against a red signal indication.

The Charles County red light program began with four traffic control signal monitoring systems installed in October 2001. Two additional systems were installed in February 2005, and eight more systems were added in February 2006. Thus, there are 14 systems currently operated by the county. According to Charles County, the red light camera program generated \$754,277 in fiscal 2011, and the county projects about \$41,300 in late payment revenues for the program in fiscal 2013, which is based on the *current* issuance of a \$20 late payment fee imposed to cover the costs of processing the late fees.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Charles County, Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of State Police, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 15, 2012
ncs/ljm

Analysis by: Evan M. Isaacson

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510