

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2014 Session

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

Senate Bill 664

(Senators Edwards and Madaleno)

Budget and Taxation

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**Transportation - Motor Fuel Tax and Highway User Revenue - Increased Local Share**

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This bill alters the distribution of funds in the Gasoline and Motor Vehicle Revenue Account (GMVRA) over three years to provide 80% to the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and 20% to local jurisdictions distributed as follows: Baltimore City (8.3%), counties (10%), and municipalities (1.7%). In addition, the bill (1) alters the distribution of the indexing of motor fuel tax revenues by requiring the revenue be transferred to GMVRA and (2) requires that municipalities receive an additional grant for highway purposes totaling \$16.0 million in fiscal 2015 and \$8.0 million in fiscal 2016.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2014.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) revenues available to MDOT decrease by an estimated \$2.1 million in FY 2015, \$76.4 million in FY 2016, \$158.9 million in FY 2017, \$209.5 million in FY 2018, and \$217.7 million in FY 2019. A reduction of this magnitude requires MDOT to reduce its 2015-2020 planned operating and capital budget by \$900.0 million.

**Local Effect:** The bill alters the distribution and source of GMVRA revenues and requires that municipalities receive additional specified grants, thereby increasing local highway user revenues by \$2.1 million in FY 2015, \$76.4 million in FY 2016, \$158.9 million in FY 2017, \$209.5 million in FY 2018, and \$217.7 million in FY 2019.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Bill Summary/Current Law:** TTF is a nonlapsing special fund that provides funding for transportation. It consists of tax and fee revenues, operating revenues, bond proceeds, and fund transfers. MDOT issues bonds backed by TTF revenues and invests the TTF fund balance to generate investment income. The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), Motor Vehicle Administration, Maryland Port Administration, and Maryland Aviation Administration generate operating revenues that cover a portion of their operating expenditures.

The tax and fee revenues allocated to TTF include motor fuel taxes, titling taxes, vehicle registration fees, a portion of the rental car sales and corporate income taxes, and other miscellaneous motor vehicle fees.

After meeting debt service requirements, MDOT may use funds in TTF for any lawful purpose related to the exercise of its rights, powers, duties, and obligations. Under current law, TTF's GMVRA revenue (commonly known as highway user revenue) must be distributed to MDOT and local jurisdictions as follows:

- 90.4% to MDOT;
- 7.7% to Baltimore City;
- 1.5% to counties; and
- 0.4% to municipalities.

Beginning July 1, 2013, motor fuel tax rates are indexed for all fuels, except for aviation or turbine fuel, to the annual change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Motor fuel tax rates will increase annually if the Comptroller's Office determines that the CPI has increased over a specified 12-month period. The revenue generated as a result of the motor fuel rate indexing and sales and use equivalent tax is distributed to TTF and retained by MDOT.

**Exhibit 1** summarizes the bill's proposed distribution of highway user revenues in fiscal 2015 through 2019.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Proposed Highway User Revenue Distribution**  
**Fiscal 2015-2019**  
**(\$ in Millions)**

	<u><b>FY 2015</b></u>	<u><b>FY 2016</b></u>	<u><b>FY 2017</b></u>	<u><b>FY 2018</b></u>	<u><b>FY 2019</b></u>
MDOT	90.4%	86.9%	82.3%	80.0%	80.0%
Baltimore City	7.7%	7.9%	8.2%	8.3%	8.3%
Counties	1.5%	4.3%	8.1%	10.0%	10.0%
Municipalities	0.4%	0.9%	1.4%	1.7%	1.7%

Source: Department of Legislative Services

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In addition, the bill (1) alters the distribution of the indexing of motor fuel tax revenues by requiring the revenue be transferred to GMVRA and (2) requires that municipalities receive an additional grant for highway purposes totaling \$16.0 million in fiscal 2015 and \$8.0 million in fiscal 2016. These monies are diverted from MDOT's share of GMVRA revenue.

**Background:**

*Highway User Revenues*

A portion of TTF revenues is credited to GMVRA and is distributed to local jurisdictions, the general fund, and MDOT. The funds retained by TTF support MDOT's capital program, debt service, and operating costs. In addition, MDOT leverages TTF revenues to issue 15-year consolidated transportation bonds. Local governments use highway user revenues to help develop and maintain local transportation projects.

Previously, the statutory distribution formula allocated 70.0% of highway user revenue to MDOT and 30.0% to local jurisdictions. As noted above, MDOT currently receives 90.4% of highway user revenue and local jurisdictions receive 9.6%.

## *Transportation Funding*

The Transportation Infrastructure Investment Act of 2013 (Chapter 429) was enacted to substantially increase the amount of transportation revenues by increasing motor fuel taxes and requiring MTA to increase base fare prices beginning in fiscal 2015.

Specifically, Chapter 429 alters motor fuel taxes by:

- indexing motor fuel tax rates, except for aviation and turbine fuel, to inflation beginning in fiscal 2014;
- imposing a 1% sales and use tax equivalent rate on all motor fuel, except for aviation and turbine fuel, beginning in fiscal 2014, increasing to 2% beginning on January 1, 2015, and to 3% beginning in fiscal 2016;
- unless federal remote sales tax legislation is enacted by December 1, 2015, the sales and use tax equivalent rate increases from 3% to 4% beginning January 1, 2016, and then increases to 5% beginning in fiscal 2017; and
- if federal remote sales tax legislation is enacted and takes effect by December 1, 2015, the sales and use tax equivalent rate remains at 3% and the Comptroller is then required to distribute 4% of total State sales and use tax revenues to TTF.

**Exhibit 2** shows the estimated increases in transportation revenues resulting from Chapter 429 from fiscal 2014 through 2018.

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**Exhibit 2**  
**Transportation Revenues Resulting from Chapter 429 of 2013**  
**(\$ in Millions)**

	<u>FY 2014</u>	<u>FY 2015</u>	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>FY 2018</u>
<b><u>Rate Increase*</u></b>					
Gasoline	3.5¢	6.8¢	10.6¢	11.6¢	12.5¢
Special Fuel	3.5¢	6.8¢	10.6¢	11.7¢	12.6¢
<b><u>Revenues</u></b>					
Sales and Use Tax Equivalent Rate	\$97	\$146	\$303	\$323	\$336
Remote Sales Tax Legislation*	0	0	52	191	199
CPI Indexing	13	22	39	56	76
Farebox Recovery	0	10	22	23	32
<b>Total Increase – MDOT</b>	<b>\$110</b>	<b>\$178</b>	<b>\$416</b>	<b>\$593</b>	<b>\$643</b>
<b>WIP – G.O. Bonds</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$45</b>	<b>\$65</b>	<b>\$85</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Total Transportation Funding</b>	<b>\$110</b>	<b>\$223</b>	<b>\$481</b>	<b>\$678</b>	<b>\$743</b>

\* Assumes federal remote sales tax legislation is enacted as specified by the Act. Unless this legislation is enacted by December 1, 2015, the sales and use tax equivalent rate increases from 3% to 4% beginning January 1, 2016, and increases to 5% beginning in fiscal 2017.

WIP: Watershed Implementation Plan

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation

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Chapter 429 also prohibits transfers from TTF unless legislation is approved by a three-fifths vote of the appropriate standing committees of the General Assembly and is enacted into law, or the Governor declares a state of emergency and declares that revenues are needed for defense or relief purposes. Any transfer must be repaid within five years.

In addition, Chapter 422 of 2013 proposes to amend the Maryland Constitution to (1) require TTF funds to be used only to pay the principal of and interest on transportation bonds and for any lawful purpose related to construction and maintenance of an adequate highway system or any other transportation-related purpose and (2) prevent TTF funds from being transferred to the general fund or a special fund. An exception to the prohibition on TTF transfers is authorized only if the Governor, by executive order, declares that a fiscal emergency exists and the General Assembly, by a three-fifths vote of both houses, approves legislation concurring with the use or transfer

of the funds. The allocation of highway user funds to local governments and the allocation of TTF funds to the Maryland Transportation Authority are not affected. The proposed constitutional amendment must be submitted for a statewide vote at the November 2014 general election.

**State Fiscal Effect:** The bill requires (1) GMVRA revenues to be distributed: 80% to MDOT and 20% to local jurisdictions (phased in over three fiscal years beginning with fiscal 2016); (2) motor fuel indexing tax revenues to be transferred to GMVRA; and (3) that municipalities receive an additional grant for highway purposes totaling \$16.0 million in fiscal 2015 and \$8.0 million in fiscal 2016. Under current law, MDOT retains 90.4% of GMVRA revenues and all of the revenue generated by the indexing of motor fuel.

Thus, altering the distribution formula decreases TTF revenues available to MDOT by \$2.1 million in fiscal 2015, \$76.4 million in fiscal 2016, \$158.9 million in fiscal 2017, \$209.5 million in fiscal 2018, and \$217.7 million in fiscal 2019, totaling \$666.6 million over the five-year period. Although the bill requires that municipalities receive an additional grant for highway purposes totaling \$16.0 million in fiscal 2015, that provision does not affect TTF revenues available to MDOT because that grant is already included in the Governor's proposed fiscal 2015 capital budget for MDOT.

In addition, the TTF revenue loss limits MDOT's ability to issue consolidated transportation bonds, net of debt service savings, in support of its capital program. MDOT advises that it would be required to reduce its 2015-2020 capital budget by \$900 million to meet required bond coverage ratios. The \$900 million equates to about 20% of the additional capital spending resulting from Chapter 429 of 2013.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** Altering the GMVRA distribution formula and requiring the distribution of specified motor fuel revenues to GMVRA increases local jurisdictions' highway user revenues by \$2.1 million in fiscal 2015, \$76.4 million in fiscal 2016, \$158.9 million in fiscal 2017, \$209.5 million in fiscal 2018, and \$217.7 million in fiscal 2019. The distribution of the increase among Baltimore City, the counties, and municipalities is shown in **Exhibit 3**.

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**Exhibit 3**  
**Projected Increase in Local Distribution of Highway User Revenues**  
**Fiscal 2015-2019**  
**(\$ in Millions)**

	<u><b>FY 2015</b></u>	<u><b>FY 2016</b></u>	<u><b>FY 2017</b></u>	<u><b>FY 2018</b></u>	<u><b>FY 2019</b></u>
Baltimore City	\$1.7	\$6.7	\$13.8	\$17.5	\$19.5
Counties	0.3	52.4	126.0	166.4	171.7
Municipalities	0.1	17.4	19.2	25.6	26.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.1</b>	<b>\$76.4</b>	<b>\$158.9</b>	<b>\$209.5</b>	<b>\$217.7</b>

Note: The fiscal 2015 impact only reflects the redistribution of the indexing of motor fuel tax revenues. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

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The bill also requires that municipalities receive an additional grant for highway purposes totaling \$16.0 million in fiscal 2015 and \$8.0 million in fiscal 2016. MDOT advises that this provision does not have an impact in fiscal 2015 as the distribution to municipalities is already included in the Governor's proposed fiscal 2015 capital budget for MDOT.

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 1067 (Delegate Beitzel, *et al.*) - Appropriations.

**Information Source(s):** Comptroller's Office, Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Robert J. Rehrmann

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