

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2017 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader**

House Bill 1334 (Delegate A. Washington, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Judicial Proceedings

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**State Highway Administration - Traffic Control Devices - Decorative Treatments**

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This bill requires the State Highway Administration (SHA) to establish a policy that allows for the installation of decorative treatments on traffic control devices that have been marred by graffiti or vandalism, as specified. The bill establishes provisions governing the issuance of permits to install decorative treatments on traffic control devices and requires SHA to adopt specified regulations. The bill also authorizes SHA to adopt any additional regulations necessary to implement the bill.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** SHA can likely handle the bill's requirements using existing budgeted resources. The bill does not specifically authorize SHA to charge a fee for a decorative treatment permit, so it is assumed that Transportation Trust Fund revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** A person may apply to the appropriate SHA district office for a permit to install a decorative treatment, which includes a digitally printed vinyl wrap or paint, on a traffic control device. A district office may issue such a permit for a device within its jurisdiction.

SHA must adopt regulations that prohibit decorative treatments from interfering with the operation or maintenance of a traffic control device or obstructing access to and ventilation

of a device. SHA must also adopt viewpoint and content neutral regulations that provide the minimum requirements for decorative treatments. A decorative treatment may not (1) contain an advertisement; (2) contain an image or a description of graphic violence; (3) contain profanity; (4) contain pornography, obscene material, or images of nudity; (5) demean or disparage an individual or a group of individuals; (6) violate a copyright or any other legal ownership interest; or (7) unnecessarily engage the attention of drivers or cause driver distraction.

**Current Law/Background:** SHA is responsible for more than 5,200 miles or approximately 16,800 lane miles of road, 2,500 bridges, 3,500 small stream crossing structures, and 80 miles of sound barriers in the State. It also has responsibility for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads and bridges to safety and performance standards while considering sociological, ecological, and economic concerns.

On every highway under its jurisdiction, SHA is required to install and maintain the traffic control devices that it considers necessary to carry out the provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law or to regulate, warn, or guide traffic. Each device installed must conform to SHA's manual and specifications.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Transportation; Caroline, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties; City of Bowie; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 7, 2017  
md/mcr Third Reader - March 21, 2017

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Analysis by: Richard L. Duncan

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