

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2019 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 389

(Senator Cassilly, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

Environment and Transportation

Motor Vehicle Registration - Exception for Low Speed Electric Vehicles - City of
Havre de Grace

This bill authorizes a person to operate a low speed electric vehicle (*i.e.*, a vehicle capable of a sustained speed of 20 miles per hour and not capable of exceeding 25 miles per hour) on a local roadway in the City of Havre de Grace on which the maximum posted speed limit does not exceed 30 miles per hour. The low speed vehicle must be kept as far to the right of the roadway as feasible, and the driver must have a valid driver's license. A low speed vehicle that is owned and operated by the City of Havre de Grace and operated on a roadway in the City of Havre de Grace (pursuant to the bill's authorization) is exempt from the general requirement that each motor vehicle driven on a highway in the State be registered. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2019.**

Fiscal Summary

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

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

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: When operated between dusk and dawn, the low speed electric vehicle must be equipped with lighting devices as required by the Motor Vehicle Administration. The State Highway Administration, in consultation with the City of Havre de Grace, may designate a location at which a person operating a low speed electric vehicle may cross (at

a right angle) a roadway that is designated (or maintained) as a part of (or an extension of) the State or federal highway system.

Current Law: Each motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer driven on a highway must be registered. Certain motor vehicles are exempt from this requirement, including certain snowmobiles in Garrett County and certain golf carts in Allegany County, Smith Island, the City of Crisfield in Somerset County, the community of Golden Beach Patuxent Knolls in St. Mary’s County, and the Town of Vienna in Dorchester County.

A “motor vehicle” is defined as a vehicle that, unless otherwise specifically exempted, is self-propelled or propelled by electric power obtained from overhead electrical wires and not operated on rails. Certain vehicles, such as low speed vehicles, bicycles, and motor scooters, are restricted to certain highways based on the maximum posted speed limit; they may be subject to different rules of the road than passenger cars and trucks.

Additional Comments: The City of Havre de Grace advises that it intends to operate a trolley under the bill’s authorization from April to October and that the bill may help mitigate traffic congestion.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 467 (Delegate Lisanti, *et al.*) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): City of Havre de Grace; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 20, 2019
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