

HOUSE BILL 551

R2, R5

4lr2276

By: **Delegate Henson**

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 2024

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Transportation Authority – Video Tolls**
3 **(Maryland Toll Relief and Accountability Act)**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring the Office of Legislative Audits to perform a performance
5 audit of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Maryland Transportation Authority's
6 toll operations; increasing the number of days within which a person alleged to be
7 liable for a video toll must pay the toll; prohibiting the Authority from imposing a
8 late payment fee for a video toll that exceeds a certain amount; increasing the
9 number of days after a toll violation that a citation must be sent; prohibiting the
10 Motor Vehicle Administration from refusing or suspending the registration of a
11 motor vehicle if the owner enters into a certain installment payment plan agreement;
12 requiring the Authority to offer an installment payment plan to certain persons
13 alleged to be liable for payment of unpaid video tolls and any associated civil
14 penalties; and generally relating to the Maryland Transportation Authority's toll
15 operations.

16 BY adding to
17 Article – Transportation
18 Section 4–408 and 21–1414(j)
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
22 Article – Transportation
23 Section 21–1414(a)(1), (2), (4), (5), (7), (9), (11), and (12)
24 Annotated Code of Maryland
25 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

26 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
27 Article – Transportation
28 Section 21–1414(b), (d)(1), and (i)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 Annotated Code of Maryland
2 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

3 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
4 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

5 **Article – Transportation**

6 **4–408.**

7 **(A) AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 5 YEARS THE OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITS**
8 **SHALL CONDUCT A PERFORMANCE AUDIT OF THE AUTHORITY THAT EVALUATES THE**
9 **EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE AUTHORITY’S TOLL OPERATIONS,**
10 **TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS, CUSTOMER SERVICE, AND BILLING PROCESSES, INCLUDING**
11 **THE EFFICIENCY OF MAILING BILLS.**

12 **(B) WITHIN 90 DAYS AFTER COMPLETION OF THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT,**
13 **THE AUTHORITY SHALL POST THE RESULTS OF THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT ON THE**
14 **AUTHORITY’S WEBSITE.**

15 21–1414.

16 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

17 (2) “Authority” means the Maryland Transportation Authority.

18 (4) “Notice of toll due” or “notice” means an administrative notice of a video
19 toll transaction.

20 (5) “Person alleged to be liable” means:

21 (i) The registered owner of a motor vehicle involved in a video toll
22 transaction; or

23 (ii) A person to whom a registered owner of a motor vehicle has
24 transferred liability for a video toll transaction in accordance with this section and the
25 regulations of the Authority.

26 (7) “Registered owner” means, with respect to a motor vehicle, the person
27 or persons designated as the registered owner in the records of the government agency that
28 is responsible for motor vehicle registration.

29 (9) “Toll violation” means the failure to pay a video toll within the time
30 prescribed by the Authority in a notice of toll due.

1 (11) "Video toll" means the amount assessed by the Authority when a video
2 toll transaction occurs.

3 (12) "Video toll transaction" means any transaction in which a motor vehicle
4 does not or did not pay a toll at the time of passage through a toll collection facility with a
5 video monitoring system.

6 (b) (1) Except as provided in subsection (g) of this section, the registered owner
7 of a motor vehicle shall be liable to the Authority for payment of a video toll as provided for
8 in the regulations of the Authority.

9 (2) The Authority shall send the registered owner of a motor vehicle that
10 has incurred a video toll a notice of toll due.

11 (3) Except as provided in subsection (g) of this section, the person alleged
12 to be liable who receives a notice of toll due shall have at least [30] **60** days to pay the video
13 toll.

14 **(4) THE AUTHORITY MAY NOT IMPOSE A FEE FOR LATE PAYMENT OF**
15 **A VIDEO TOLL THAT EXCEEDS 500% OF THE AMOUNT OF THE VIDEO TOLL.**

16 (d) (1) The Authority or its duly authorized agent shall send a citation via
17 first-class mail, no later than [60] **90** days after the toll violation, to the person alleged to
18 be liable under this section.

19 (i) (1) **[The] SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (5) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE**
20 Administration shall refuse or suspend the registration of a motor vehicle that incurs a toll
21 violation under this section if:

22 (i) The **[Maryland Transportation]** Authority notifies the
23 Administration that a registered owner of the motor vehicle has been served with a citation
24 in accordance with this section and has failed to:

25 1. **A.** Pay the video toll and the civil penalty for the toll
26 violation by the date specified in the citation; **OR**

27 **B. ENTER AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN**
28 **AGREEMENT UNDER SUBSECTION (J) OF THIS SECTION;** and

29 2. Contest liability for the toll violation by the date identified
30 and in the manner specified in the citation; or

31 (ii) The **[Maryland Transportation]** Authority or the District Court
32 notifies the Administration that a person who elected to contest liability for a toll violation
33 under this section has failed to:

1 1. Appear for trial or has been determined to be guilty of the
2 toll violation; and

3 2. Pay the video toll and civil penalty.

4 (2) In conjunction with the [Maryland Transportation] Authority, the
5 Administration may adopt regulations and develop procedures to carry out the refusal or
6 suspension of a registration under this subsection.

7 (3) The procedures in this subsection are in addition to any other penalty
8 provided by law for a toll violation under this section.

9 (4) This subsection may be applied to enforce a reciprocal agreement
10 entered into by the State and another jurisdiction in accordance with § 21-1415 of this
11 subtitle.

12 **(5) THE ADMINISTRATION MAY NOT REFUSE OR SUSPEND THE**
13 **REGISTRATION OF A MOTOR VEHICLE THAT INCURS A TOLL VIOLATION UNDER THIS**
14 **SECTION IF THE OWNER OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE ENTERS INTO AND IS IN**
15 **COMPLIANCE WITH AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN AGREEMENT OFFERED BY THE**
16 **AUTHORITY.**

17 **(J) (1) THE AUTHORITY SHALL OFFER AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN**
18 **TO A PERSON ALLEGED TO BE LIABLE FOR PAYMENT OF UNPAID VIDEO TOLLS AND**
19 **ANY ASSOCIATED CIVIL PENALTIES THAT TOTAL AT LEAST \$200.**

20 **(2) (I) AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN AGREEMENT SHALL**
21 **REQUIRE THE PERSON TO MAKE MONTHLY PAYMENTS UNTIL THE TOTAL AMOUNT**
22 **OF THE OUTSTANDING UNPAID VIDEO TOLLS AND ANY ASSOCIATED CIVIL PENALTIES**
23 **OWED ARE PAID.**

24 **(II) THE AUTHORITY MAY:**

25 **1. WAIVE ANY PORTION OF THE ASSOCIATED**
26 **OUTSTANDING CIVIL PENALTIES; AND**

27 **2. ALLOW A PAYMENT EXTENSION OF NOT MORE THAN**
28 **15 DAYS FOR ANY PAYMENT UNDER AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN AGREEMENT.**

29 **(3) THE AUTHORITY SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS THAT ESTABLISH**
30 **THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN AGREEMENT UNDER**
31 **THIS SUBSECTION.**

32 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
33 October 1, 2024.