

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2024 Session

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

House Bill 440

(Charles County Delegation)

Environment and Transportation

Judicial Proceedings

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**Motor Vehicle Registration - Exceptions for Golf Carts - Cobb Island**

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This bill authorizes a person to operate a golf cart equipped with approved lighting on Cobb Island in Charles County between dawn and dusk on a highway on which the maximum posted speed limit does not exceed 30 miles per hour. The golf cart must be kept as far to the right of the roadway as feasible, and the driver must have a valid driver's license. A golf cart operating 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 July 1, 2024.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill does not materially affect State finances or operations.

**Local Effect:** The bill does not materially affect local finances or operations.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential minimal.

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**Analysis**

**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 Allegany and Garrett counties; and
- certain golf carts in Allegany County, on Smith Island, in the City of Crisfield in Somerset County, in the community of Golden Beach Patuxent Knolls in

St. Mary's County, in the Town of Vienna in Dorchester County, and on Hoopers Island and Taylors Island.

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.

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### **Additional Information**

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 948 and SB 374 of 2023 and SB 76 of 2022.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Charles County; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 6, 2024  
km/ljm Third Reader - March 18, 2024

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Analysis by: Eric F. Pierce

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