

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 238 (Delegate Brown)

Commerce and Government Matters

Vehicle Laws - Safe Lane Changes

This bill prohibits a vehicle driver from changing lanes or moving from a shoulder or bikeway into a lane until it is safe to do so. Current law prohibits a driver from changing lanes until the driver determines that it is safe to do so.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal general fund revenue increase from the penalty provision applicable to this offense under the Maryland Vehicle Law (maximum \$500 fine). Enforcement could be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Revenues: In fiscal 1998 there were 7,263 citations issued under the current law that prohibits a driver from changing lanes until the driver has determined that it is safe to do so. This violation carries a fine of \$70. Of the total citations issued, 1,955 were prepaid. The District Court does not record the number of traffic trial cases that result in convictions.

This bill creates a different standard that does not rely on the driver's determination that it is safe to change lanes. To the extent that the bill's changes result in an increase in the number of citations issued and subsequent convictions, general fund revenues could increase. However, the number of additional citations and convictions that may occur under this bill is unknown.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (District Court of Maryland), Department of State Police, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 10, 1999

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