

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 853 (Senator Hafer)

Judicial Proceedings

Motorcycles - Failure to Pay Electronic Toll

This bill exempts motorcycle owners with valid electronic toll collection (M-TAG) accounts who have registered their license plates with the Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA) from liability for failure to pay an electronic toll and requires the MdTA to automatically deduct the amount of the toll from the appropriate account.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill codifies existing practice of the MdTA.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Electronic toll collection is a system that charges an account holder for the appropriate toll by electronic transmission of information between a device on a motor vehicle and a device in a toll lane at a toll collection facility. If the operator of a motor vehicle fails to pay the toll at any facility, the registered owner of the vehicle is liable to the MdTA for payment of the toll and a \$50 fine.

Background: Since April 1999, the MdTA has offered its electronic-toll-collection system to commuters at the agency's three harbor crossings: the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel (I-895), the Fort McHenry Tunnel (I-95), and the Francis Scott Key Bridge (I-695).

The MdTA indicates that when a motor vehicle currently passes through a toll plaza without paying (either by cash or M-TAG), a sensor installed at the facility produces a recorded

image of the license plate of the vehicle. The license plate is then cross-referenced with current M-TAG member accounts. If there is a valid account assigned to the license plate recorded, the account is automatically charged and the owner of the motor vehicle is not liable for failure to pay the toll. If there is not a valid account assigned to the license plate recorded, the registered owner of the vehicle is presumed to be liable and sent a citation for failure to pay the toll. The MdTA indicates that this practice is currently applied to all motor vehicles. The MdTA further advises that because of the size and placement of motorcycle M-TAG transponders, there are higher incidents of transmission failures with motorcycles.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 1329 (Delegates Owings and DeCarlo) - Rules and Executive Nominations.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation (Maryland Transportation Authority), Department of Legislative Services

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drg/jr

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