

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 934 (Delegate Hecht, *et al.*)
Commerce and Government Matters

High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes - Use by Inherently Low Emission Vehicles

This bill requires the State Highway Administration (SHA), when designating a portion of a highway as a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, to place traffic control devices indicating that the HOV lane may be used by inherently low emission vehicles (ILEVs). It directs the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA), SHA, and the Department of State Police to design a decal or label to designate a vehicle as an ILEV.

The bill requires the MVA to report the number of issued decals or stickers to the General Assembly by December 31 of each year.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The State Highway Administration could meet the bill's requirements with existing resources, assuming that only certain existing signs would need to be modified.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: On every highway under its jurisdiction, SHA is required to place and maintain traffic control devices that it considers necessary to regulate traffic or carry out the provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law. The Code of Federal Regulations defines

an inherently low-emission vehicle as one that generates fuel vapor emissions that are five or less total grams per test as measured by the current Federal Test Procedure.

Background: California enacted a similar law in 1999 that allows low-emission vehicles to use HOV lanes until 2004. The Governor can remove these vehicles' access to individual HOV lanes during periods of peak congestion.

State Expenditures: SHA advises that it would cost approximately \$5,000 to implement the bill if it simply modifies the "motorcycles OK" plaques on Interstate 270, the only highway that now uses HOV lanes. It also advises that if it were necessary to modify all of the HOV signs on I-270, the costs would be significant.

The MVA estimates that it would cost \$1,000 to issue approximately 500 stickers for ILEVs and that it would collect about the same amount through the \$2.50 fee per sticker.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Transportation (State Highway Administration), Department of State Police, Department of Legislative Services

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