

**Department of Legislative Services**

Maryland General Assembly

2001 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

Senate Bill 494 (Senator Astle)

Judicial Proceedings

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**Vehicle Laws - Multipurpose Passenger Vehicles - Operating Restrictions**

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This bill prohibits a multipurpose passenger vehicle that has a motor with a rating of 1.5 brake horsepower or less, or a capacity of less than 70 cubic centimeters piston displacement from: (1) being operated on a roadway with a speed limit of more than 50 miles per hour; or (2) on any expressway or other controlled access highway. The bill also requires persons who sell such multipurpose passenger vehicles to inform the buyer of the bill's operating restrictions.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Enforcement could be handled with existing resources. Revenues would not be affected.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** A multipurpose passenger vehicle is a motor vehicle that: (1) is designed primarily for carrying passengers and which is constructed on a truck chassis or with special features for occasional off-road use; (2) has three wheels; or (3) is of unique design and does not clearly meet the requirements of any other class.

A person may not operate a motorcycle that has a motor with a rating of 1.5 brake horsepower or less, or a capacity of less than 70 cubic centimeters piston displacement:

(1) on a roadway with a speed limit of more than 50 miles per hour; or (2) on any expressway or other controlled access highway.

**Background:** Several different vehicles meet the definition of multipurpose passenger vehicle, including go-carts, certain kinds of all terrain vehicles, and “scooters.” A scooter is a battery-operated three-wheeled commuter-style vehicle designed to carry one or two passengers, which has experienced a recent rise in popularity. Scooters do not readily fit into a standard motor vehicle category and there is some question as to whether they can be legally used on higher speed roads. Scooters are registered as motorcycles and the manufacturer reports that the top speed is about 70 miles per hour; however, they are limited in range and are more ideally used as commuter vehicles for city residents or as rental vehicles for vacation resorts.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Transportation (Motor Vehicle Administration),  
Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader – February 23, 2001  
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