

**Department of Legislative Services**

Maryland General Assembly

2002 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

Senate Bill 60

(Senator Harris)

Judicial Proceedings

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**Transportation - Traffic Control Devices - Schools**

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This bill requires the State Highway Administration (SHA) to consider the placement of a traffic control device, upon request, on a highway under its jurisdiction at a vehicular entrance to or exit from school property if the intersection meets at least 50% of the SHA standards under the generally applicable policy governing placement of traffic control devices.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill's requirements could be handled with existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** On every highway under its control, SHA must place and maintain those traffic control devices that it considers necessary to carry out the provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law to regulate, warn, or guide traffic. The specifications of traffic control devices are guided by the nationally recognized *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD). The MUTCD specifies eight "warrants," or criteria, that should be considered for placement of a traffic control device, including: (1) eight-hour vehicle volume; (2) four-hour vehicle volume; (3) peak vehicle volume; (4) pedestrian volume; (5) school proximity (with a substantial sub-listing of vehicle and pedestrian volume factors); (6) the coordinated signal system in the area; (7) the accident

experience; and (8) the roadway network (typically applicable in more urban road grids). In considering these factors for the placement of a traffic control device, the SHA may contract for one or more studies with an outside consultant. While any combination of data relating to these warrants may be considered, ultimately there is no quantitative scorecard to determine whether or not a device is placed.

Local authorities may place or maintain a traffic control device on a highway under SHA jurisdiction with the permission, and under the direction, of SHA. A local authority must place traffic control devices on highways under its jurisdiction that it considers necessary to carry out the provisions of Maryland Vehicle Law and local traffic ordinances or to regulate, warn, or guide traffic. All such devices must conform to SHA specifications.

**Background:** Local concerns often arise regarding sufficient traffic control on State highways due to greater familiarity with particular sections of roadway and changing traffic patterns. Local experience such as increased congestion or more traffic accidents prompt citizens and local public officials to petition the SHA for review of the placement of traffic control devices at specific locations under SHA jurisdiction such as busy intersections or school entrances/exits.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 5, 2002  
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