

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 508 (Senator Collins)
Judicial Proceedings

Motor Vehicles - Camping Trailers, Motor Homes, and Travel Trailers

This bill alters provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law relating to width and length of motor homes and travel trailers, and authorizes the State Highway Administration (SHA) to issue permits for an unlimited number of specified oversized vehicles to use the highways in the State for commercial purposes.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal increase in special fund fee revenues in FY 2003. Offsetting increase in special fund expenditures to administer the new fee program. Potential significant decrease in federal highway funding.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: For a motor home or travel trailer on any highway that is part of the interstate system or State primary system, the bill extends the 102-inch width limit by excluding safety devices, retracted awnings, and other appurtenances installed by the manufacturer.

A Class M motor home may not exceed 45 feet in length, a travel trailer may not exceed 40 feet in length, and a combination of noncommercial vehicles consisting of a power unit and travel trailer may not exceed 65 feet in length.

SHA may issue a permit allowing an unlimited number of oversized camping trailers, motor homes, or travel trailers to use the highways in the State for commercial purposes. The permit is effective for one year and may not impose conditions on the movement of the permitted vehicles, nor require submission of travel routes, dates, or times. The minimum permit fee is \$30.

Current Law: For a bus, motor home, or travel trailer on any highway that is part of the interstate system or State primary system, the width limit is 102 inches. There are no exclusions or exceptions.

A Class M motor home may not exceed 40 feet in length, and a combination of noncommercial vehicles consisting of a power unit and travel trailer may not exceed 60 feet in length. There is no specific length limit on travel trailers alone.

SHA may issue a permit for oversized and overweight vehicles in the State. The fees charged should recover, but not exceed, the administrative costs associated with the permitting and monitoring program. The permit for an oversized vehicle is not less than \$30, and the permit fee for an overweight vehicle is not less than \$30 for the first 45 tons and not less than \$5 for each additional ton. Prior to a person moving an oversized or overweight load that requires a permit, the permit must be in the person's possession. Each permit must specify the maximum size or weight permitted, the route to be followed, and the date and hour on which the trip is made.

Under Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, a commercial vehicle that is over 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight (GVW) must obtain a U.S. Department of Transportation number, be properly marked, maintain a log book for trips over 100 miles, and stop at all weigh/inspection stations. Additionally, under the Maryland Vehicle Law, the driver of a commercial vehicle over 26,000 pounds GVW is required to obtain a commercial driver's license with medical certification.

State Fiscal Effect: Because fees must be set only to recover program costs, any potential increase in special fund revenues from fees is expected to be offset by an equal increase in expenditures for program administration.

SHA reports that the bill could result in a deviation from federal transportation standards. If that is determined to be the case, the State could lose substantial federal highway funding.

Additional Comments: This fiscal note assumes that the reference to subsections (f)(2) and (3) contained in section 24-112(b)(2)(ii) of the bill (page 3) is an intended reference to subsections (e)(2) and (3).

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 18, 2002
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