

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 409 (Delegate Myers, *et al.*)
Environmental Matters

Vehicle Laws - Window Tint - Inspection by Licensed Inspection Stations

This bill authorizes the Automotive Safety Enforcement Division (ASED) of the Maryland State Police (MSP) to permit inspection stations to issue a repair order certificate for added (aftermarket) window tint.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. Any change in State activities would not materially affect State finances. Certification of inspection stations could be handled with existing personnel.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful. Small businesses would be permitted to perform inspections of aftermarket window tint and certify repair order certificates; as such, business would expand and revenues would increase.

Analysis

Current Law: A MSP trooper or other law enforcement officer may issue a Safety Equipment Repair Order (SERO) to the operator of a vehicle that is observed to be defective or not functioning in accordance with Maryland laws and regulations. The SERO requires the vehicle owner to have the problems cited on the SERO repaired within 10 days, and a certification of the repair (repair order certificate) to be submitted to ASED within 30 days.

Before issuing a license to an inspection station certifying it to conduct inspections of motor vehicles, ASED must inspect the facility as to its ability to inspect and correct equipment. The license authorizes the facility to inspect the equipment of a vehicle for which a SERO has been issued and issue a repair order certificate.

Background: When a SERO is issued, repairs can be made by the owner of the car personally, or by a MSP certified garage. After the repairs have been made, the car must be inspected by a MSP certified inspection station.

However, if the defect identified on the SERO is aftermarket window tint, the owner must travel to ASED, and a MSP trooper assigned to ASED must inspect and test the degree of tint. Windows on the driver and right front passenger doors with aftermarket tint must have at least 35% light transmittance, and red, yellow, amber, and reflective tint is prohibited on these windows.

MSP advises that the test for aftermarket window tint involves placing a special card behind the window; if it is still legible from the outside of the vehicle, the tint is within the acceptable range. MSP also advises that the personnel who currently handle inspecting aftermarket window tint perform all other safety equipment repair inspections as well.

Small Business Effect: Inspection stations will now be able to issue repair order certificates for aftermarket window tint. Providing this service will cause business to increase, along with revenues.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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