

HOUSE BILL 1367

R6, E4

71r3301

By: **Delegates Conway, Costa, Elmore, Frush, Glassman, Jennings, Lawton, Malone, Mathias, Morhaim, Rudolph, Stull, Weir, and Weldon**

Introduced and read first time: March 2, 2007

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

Re-referred to: Environmental Matters, March 12, 2007

Committee Report: Favorable

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 21, 2007

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws – Emergency Vehicles – Green Flashing Lights**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing a stationary emergency vehicle serving as a mobile
4 command unit to be equipped with or display a flashing, blinking, or oscillating
5 green light or signal device to designate the vehicle as the command post.

6 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
7 Article – Transportation
8 Section 22–218
9 Annotated Code of Maryland
10 (2006 Replacement Volume and 2006 Supplement)

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
12 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

13 **Article – Transportation**

14 22–218.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (a) Every emergency vehicle, in addition to any other equipment and
2 distinctive markings required by this subtitle, shall be equipped with a siren, exhaust
3 whistle, or bell capable of giving an audible signal.

4 (b) (1) Every emergency vehicle, in addition to any other equipment and
5 distinctive markings required by the Maryland Vehicle Law, shall be equipped with
6 signal lamps mounted as high as practicable, which shall be capable of displaying to
7 the front and to the rear a flashing red light or lights. These lights shall have
8 sufficient intensity to be visible at 500 feet in normal sunlight.

9 (2) Every school vehicle meeting the requirements established by the
10 Administrator shall be equipped with alternately flashing warning lights in
11 accordance with the standards adopted under § 22–228 of this subtitle.

12 (c) (1) A person may not drive or move on any highway any vehicle or
13 equipment that is equipped with or displays any light or signal device designed to emit
14 an oscillating, rotating, blinking, or other type of emission of light, unless designated
15 and authorized by the Administrator as indicated in paragraphs (2) through [(10)](11)
16 of this subsection. The provisions of this section do not prohibit the display and use of
17 any lighting device that may be permitted or required elsewhere in the Maryland
18 Vehicle Law.

19 (2) Vehicles of the police department and other city, county, State, or
20 federal law enforcement agencies may be equipped with and display red, white, or blue
21 lights or signal devices.

22 (3) (i) Vehicles of city, county, State, or federal fire departments or
23 duly constituted volunteer fire departments or rescue squads, or the Maryland
24 Institute for Emergency Medical Services System, may be equipped with or display red
25 and/or white lights or signal devices.

26 (ii) In each volunteer fire company, no more than five of the
27 following officers may have their privately owned vehicles equipped with red lights or
28 signal devices which may be displayed only while on route to or at the scene of an
29 emergency:

- 30 1. The fire chief or the highest ranking fireline officer;
- 31 2. One or more of the assistant chiefs or deputy chiefs,
32 whichever rank is second in command; and
- 33 3. The emergency medical services commander.

1 (iii) 1. The fire police of each volunteer fire company may
2 have their privately owned vehicles equipped with red lights or signal devices
3 designed to emit an oscillating, rotating, blinking, or other type of emission of light.

4 2. The lights or signal devices may be flashed or
5 oscillated or otherwise used only while the vehicle is at the scene of an accident, flood,
6 or other emergency to which the volunteer fire company is responding.

7 (4) Ambulances may be equipped with or display red and/or white
8 lights or signal devices.

9 (5) State vehicles used in response to oil or hazardous materials spills
10 may be equipped with or display red and/or white lights or signal devices.

11 (6) Service vehicles, rural letter carrier vehicles, slow moving farm
12 vehicles, and tow trucks may be equipped with or display yellow or amber lights or
13 signal devices.

14 (7) State vehicles designated for emergency use by the Commissioner
15 of Correction may be equipped with or display red lights or signal devices.

16 (8) (i) Except as provided in subparagraphs (ii) and (iii) of this
17 paragraph, the blue, red, or white lights or signal devices may be flashed or oscillated
18 or otherwise used only while on route to or at the scene of an emergency, and their use
19 does not relieve an emergency vehicle from otherwise giving an audible warning as
20 required elsewhere in the Maryland Vehicle Law.

21 (ii) The driver of an emergency vehicle may use flashing lights
22 within 100 feet of the entrance ramp of a fire or rescue station while parking or
23 backing the emergency vehicle.

24 (iii) The driver of an emergency vehicle of a fire department or
25 rescue squad shall, at the discretion of the officer in charge, flash or oscillate or
26 otherwise use red and white lights or signal devices while stopped, standing, or parked
27 on the roadway at the scene of an emergency.

28 **(9) A STATIONARY EMERGENCY VEHICLE SERVING AS A MOBILE**
29 **COMMAND UNIT MAY BE EQUIPPED WITH OR DISPLAY A FLASHING, BLINKING,**
30 **OR OSCILLATING GREEN LIGHT OR SIGNAL DEVICE TO DESIGNATE THE VEHICLE**
31 **AS THE COMMAND POST.**

1 ~~[(9)]~~ **(10)** The yellow or amber lights or signal devices permitted on
2 vehicles under paragraph (6) of this subsection may be flashed or oscillated or
3 otherwise used only in the course of official duties, to indicate to the public that the
4 vehicle is a slow moving vehicle or otherwise is impeding traffic.

5 ~~[(10)]~~ **(11)** (i) An emergency vehicle of any foreign state may be
6 equipped with any lights or signals:

7 1. As provided by this subsection; or
8 2. As permitted by the state in which the vehicle is
9 registered.

10 (ii) 1. The use of any lights or signals permitted under this
11 paragraph is limited to an emergency vehicle, as defined in § 11–118 of this article,
12 responding to an emergency or pursuing a violator, and equipped with an audible
13 signal as provided in this section.

14 2. Foreign vehicles, as defined in § 11–124 of this article,
15 which are privately owned by members of volunteer fire companies, ambulance or
16 rescue squads, fire departments, and law enforcement agencies may be equipped with
17 lights or signals as permitted by the state in which the vehicle is registered, but such
18 lights or signals may be used while the vehicle is in this State only by those personnel
19 and under the circumstances authorized under paragraph (3) of this subsection.

20 (iii) In addition to the penalties provided in Title 27 of this
21 article, any person convicted of a violation of this section may have his driving
22 privileges suspended for a period of 30 days, and the registration of the vehicle may be
23 suspended for a period of 30 days, notwithstanding that the owner of the vehicle may
24 not be the operator at the time of the offense, unless the owner proves to the
25 satisfaction of the Administration that he had no control over the use or display of a
26 light or signal device and could not prevent the violation of this section.

27 (d) A police vehicle when used as an emergency vehicle may, but need not be,
28 equipped with the flashing red and/or blue lights specified in this section.

29 (e) Except as provided in subsection (c)(3) of this section, the flashing
30 lighting described in subsections (b) and (c) of this section may not be used on any
31 vehicle other than an emergency vehicle, service vehicle, or school vehicle.

1 (f) The use of the signal equipment described in this section imposes on
2 drivers of other vehicles the obligation to yield the right-of-way and stop as required
3 in Title 21 of this article.

4 (g) On taxicabs, the flashing green lights known as emergency hold-up lights
5 may be mounted on the roof or outside rear and front of the vehicle.

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
7 October 1, 2007.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.