

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 939

(Senator Stone)

Finance

State Highway Administration - Snow Removal - Use of Farm Trucks

This bill allows the State Highway Administration within the Maryland Department of Transportation to hire an owner of a registered farm truck for snow removal services. SHA may adopt regulations to implement the bill.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would not increase the total amount spent by SHA on snow removal services, assuming that farmers are paid the same hourly rate as the private contractors currently hired for such services.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Farmers who are small businesses and would receive payment for snow removal would benefit as a result of the bill. This impact is expected to be minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: A farm truck is • a Class E truck vehicle; and • has a shipping weight of its chassis and battery, as certified by the manufacturer, of more than 0.75 tons. Any applicant who certifies that he/she is a farmer and specifies its proposed use is entitled to a Class E farm registration. The annual registration fee paid is based on the maximum gross vehicle and ranges from \$5.00 to \$5.25 per 1,000 pounds. Farm trucks can only be used for hire to haul farm products to another farmer.

SHA is directed to, among other things, keep all State highways reasonably clear of snow.

Background: In fiscal 2007, SHA spent \$48.3 million for winter maintenance expenditures. Of this amount, \$14.1 million was for contractor payments to aid in snow removal. These contracts run from November 15 to April 30. SHA currently pays between \$85 per hour for a single axle truck to \$115 per hour for a loader. The fiscal 2009 allowance includes \$21.0 million for winter maintenance expenditures.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 1480 (Delegate Boteler, *et al.*) – Environmental Matters.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 11, 2008
mll/lgc

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