

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1303

(Delegate Taylor)

Environmental Matters

Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program - Transfer of Ownership of Vehicle

This bill requires that vehicles currently subject to vehicle emissions inspections be inspected within 10 business days from the date that ownership of the vehicle is transferred if the vehicle has been in operation for at least five years from the vehicle's model year or first registration date, whichever is later.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential increase in Transportation Trust Fund expenditures to the extent that contractual services are necessary to assist in computer reprogramming at the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: In response to requirements of the federal Clean Air Act, Maryland has operated a vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program in various parts of the State since 1984. All model year 1977 and newer vehicles in the State, unless specifically exempted, must be inspected and tested every two years for a \$14 fee.

Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP) testing in Maryland is operated as a centralized system. VEIP stations are State-owned with a contractor performing the tests and maintaining the facilities under State oversight. The VEIP testing network currently consists of 19 centralized inspection stations located in 13 counties (Anne Arundel,

Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, and Washington) and Baltimore City. Around 1.6 million tests are conducted annually.

State Fiscal Effect: The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) jointly implement VEIP. MDE's Mobile Sources Control Program is responsible for the design and quality assurance elements of the program, while MDOT is responsible for vehicle scheduling and compliance and the operation of the VEIP testing stations. The bill only affects the operations of MDOT in administering VEIP.

Although the bill does not require additional vehicles to be inspected, it does alter the scheduling of VEIP inspections. MDOT currently schedules inspections in a manner designed to minimize customer wait times. MDOT issues notice to a vehicle's owner about two months after title of the vehicle is transferred. Requiring testing within a shorter period may significantly reduce MDOT's ability to efficiently schedule VEIP inspections.

In addition, MVA advises that internal computer reprogramming is necessary to implement the requirements of the bill. If MVA is unable to accomplish the estimated 400 additional hours of reprogramming with existing staff and resources, it may be necessary to contract with an outside computer services vendor at a cost of between \$50,000 and \$200,000. The Department of Legislative Services advises that, if other legislation is passed requiring computer reprogramming changes, economies of scale may be realized should it be necessary to retain outside contractual services; this reduces the costs associated with this bill and the other legislation affecting MVA.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 6, 2009
ncs/ljm

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