

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised

Senate Bill 643

(Senator Ramirez, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

Environmental Matters

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Vehicle Laws - Stolen Vehicles - Notice

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This bill requires a police department to, within three days of taking a vehicle reported stolen into custody, send notice to the last known owner of the vehicle by certified mail, return receipt requested, and by phone if the number is available.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase negligibly beginning in FY 2013 for the Department of State Police (DSP) to provide the additional forms of notice required by the bill; DSP operations may be more significantly affected by the shortened notice which may also result in additional overtime compensation.

**Local Effect:** Local law enforcement operations may be significantly affected beginning in FY 2013 to provide additional notice within a shortened timeframe as required by the bill; expenditures increase due to postage and communication costs and may increase for some jurisdictions from overtime payments for existing personnel or to hire additional personnel.

**Small Business Effect:** Minimal.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** The anti-theft provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law require that a police officer immediately report reliable information that a vehicle has been stolen to the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) and DSP, unless the police officer has received reliable information of the recovery of the vehicle. A police officer must also immediately report reliable information to MVA and DSP regarding the recovery of a vehicle that was previously reported stolen.

MVA must maintain and index cumulative public records of stolen vehicles reported to it. MVA may suspend the registration of a vehicle whose theft is reported to it, and until MVA learns of the recovery of the vehicle or that the report of its theft was erroneous, it may not issue a certificate of title for the vehicle.

**Background:** According to the Maryland *Uniform Crime Report*, there were 18,024 vehicles reported stolen in 2010, 66% of which were recovered by police. The number of motor vehicle thefts in 2010 was nearly half of the average number of thefts between 2002 and 2004.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties; Baltimore City; the cities of Frederick and Havre de Grace; Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 28, 2012  
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