

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 86

(Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee)(By Request -
Departmental - Transportation)

Judicial Proceedings

Environmental Matters

Vehicle Laws - Size, Weight, and Axle Load Limits

This emergency departmental bill repeals the authorization for the issuance of special vehicle permits for oversize and overweight vehicles and establishes a separate exemption from size, weight, and load limits for vehicles owned by, or used under contract with, the State or a political subdivision of the State when engaged in snow or ice removal or emergency operations consistent with federal law.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State finances, although workloads likely decrease minimally for State Highway Administration (SHA) and other agencies involved in winter road clearance and emergency operations.

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local finances, although workloads likely decrease minimally for jurisdictions involved in winter road clearance and emergency operations.

Small Business Effect: The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment. (The attached assessment does not reflect amendments to the bill.)

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The subtitle of the Maryland Vehicle Law governing size, weight, and load limits generally does not apply to emergency vehicles, certain farm

equipment, and any vehicle operated under a special permit. According to MDOT, by specifically exempting from permitting requirements State and local vehicles used for winter road clearing and emergency operations, the bill removes a time-consuming burden that impedes response times for road crews and emergency vehicles.

The Maryland Vehicle Law authorizes SHA and the Department of State Police to jointly develop regulations to facilitate the movement of oversize and overweight vehicles. In exceptional cases, special vehicle permits may be issued for vehicles exceeding maximum size and weight limitations; the permits are not intended to allow regular and continuous movement by a vehicle. MDOT advises that the restriction on the issuance of special vehicle permits for oversize and overweight vehicles under “regular and continuous movement” are unnecessary under federal law and duplicative with the permitting authority provided under a separate section of the Maryland Vehicle Law.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 14, 2014
mc/ljm Revised - Enrolled Bill - April 14, 2014

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Vehicle Laws – Size, Weight, and Axle Load Limits

BILL NUMBER: SB 86

PREPARED BY: Department of Transportation

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS