

Department of Legislative Services
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 357 (Delegate B. Barnes, *et al.*)
Environment and Transportation

Vehicle Laws - Prohibition Against Smoking in Vehicle Containing Young Child

This bill prohibits a driver of a motor vehicle from smoking a tobacco product in a vehicle in which a child younger than age eight is a passenger. The bill also prohibits the driver from allowing vehicle passengers to smoke in the presence of such a child. The prohibition does not apply to a mobile home when it is being used as a permanent or temporary living space and instead of as a conveyance on highways. The offense is not a moving violation for which points may be assessed. A person who violates this provision is subject to a maximum fine of \$50. "Smoking" is defined as the burning of a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, or other device or substance that contains tobacco.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Potential minimal increase in general fund revenues due to the bill's penalty provision. Enforcement can be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: Enforcement can be handled with existing resources. No effect on revenues.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: "Smoking" under the Health-General Article means the burning of a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco. In the Transportation Article, a "vehicle" means a device in, on, or by which any individual or property is or might be transported on a highway. A vehicle does not include an electronic personal assistive motoring device. A "motor vehicle" is self-propelled or propelled by electric power obtained from overhead electrical wires and cannot be operated on rails. A motor vehicle includes a low-speed vehicle but excludes mopeds and motor scooters.

The Clean Indoor Air Act of 2007 (Chapters 501 and 502 of 2007) does not limit the smoking of tobacco products by adults in private residences or in privately owned vehicles; however, it does specifically prohibit smoking in a private vehicle that is being used for the public transportation of children or as part of health care or day care transportation. The prohibition applies to children of any age. State law and regulations generally prohibit the smoking of tobacco products on public modes of transportation, in government buildings, and in the workplace. That prohibition does not apply to a tobacconist. The Clean Indoor Air Act of 2007 generally prohibits smoking in restaurants, bars, and other indoor areas open to the public.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 82 of 2014 received an unfavorable report from the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. Its cross file, HB 585 of 2014, was withdrawn before being heard by the House Economic Matters Committee. SB 30 of 2013 passed the Senate and was heard by the House Environmental Matters Committee, where no further action was taken. Its cross file, HB 528 of 2013, was heard by the House Environmental Matters Committee, where no further action was taken. SB 559 of 2012 passed the Senate and was heard in the House Environmental Matters Committee, where no further action was taken. Similar bills were introduced in the 2007 through 2011 legislative sessions.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of State Police, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 12, 2015
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