

HOUSE BILL 1384

R6

8lr1870

By: **Delegate Miele**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2018

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Motor Vehicles – School Vehicles – Flashing Advisory Signs**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing a school vehicle to be equipped with a rear-facing flashing
4 advisory sign to warn drivers of other vehicles of the presence of the school vehicle
5 when it is about to engage in certain activity that requires certain care; establishing
6 certain standards and requirements for flashing advisory signs; authorizing the
7 placement of a front-facing flashing advisory sign on a school vehicle under certain
8 circumstances and subject to certain standards and requirements; establishing a
9 certain standard for the display of certain warnings; and generally relating to
10 equipping school vehicles with flashing advisory signs.

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Transportation
13 Section 22–228
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2017 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Transportation**

19 22–228.

20 (a) (1) (i) The Administrator may adopt regulations for lighting
21 equipment, special warning devices, markings, and identification to be used by school
22 vehicles.

23 (ii) Regulations adopted under this paragraph shall be consistent
24 with the provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2) (i) A school vehicle registered in the State shall be equipped with an
2 8–light system of alternately flashing lights.

3 (ii) The 8–light safety system of alternately flashing lights shall
4 meet the standards contained in the SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) Standard J887
5 (May 1982), and shall consist of 2 amber lights and 2 red lights at the rear of the vehicle,
6 and 2 amber lights and 2 red lights at the front of the vehicle.

7 (3) A school vehicle may be equipped with a white flashing light installed
8 on the roof of the vehicle.

9 (4) School vehicles shall be marked and identified as provided in, and
10 school vehicle lighting equipment and special warning devices shall conform with, the
11 regulations adopted by the Administrator.

12 (b) Except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, a person may not operate
13 any alternately flashing light on any school vehicle except when the school vehicle is
14 stopping or stopped on a roadway for the purpose of receiving or discharging passengers.

15 (c) As to any school vehicle, whenever the vehicle is not being operated on a
16 highway for the transportation of children, students, or teachers for educational purposes
17 or in connection with a school activity:

18 (1) The alternately flashing lights shall be deactivated; and

19 (2) The words “school bus” at the front and rear of the vehicle shall be
20 covered or otherwise concealed.

21 (d) Except as otherwise provided in this section, every school vehicle driver shall
22 put in operation alternately flashing amber lights not less than 100 feet before bringing the
23 vehicle to a full stop for the purpose of receiving or discharging passengers, and place into
24 operation the alternately flashing red lights upon stopping.

25 (e) (1) This subsection applies only to a school vehicle being driven on the same
26 roadway as another school vehicle in the act of loading or unloading passengers.

27 (2) Except as otherwise provided in this section, every school vehicle driver
28 shall put in operation the alternately flashing lights when approaching from the rear or the
29 front, within 100 feet of another school vehicle in the act of loading or unloading passengers
30 on the roadway.

31 (f) (1) In this subsection, “loading zone” means an area:

32 (i) That is:

33 1. On a highway, but not on the roadway, for use in receiving
34 or discharging passengers residing on the same side of the highway as the loading zone; or

2. Not on a highway; and

(ii) Whose location has been designated and approved by either the superintendent of schools in the local school system in which the loading zone is located, the Department of State Police, or the local police department, in cooperation with the State Highway Administration or local traffic engineering agency, as applicable.

(2) It is the policy of this State to encourage the establishment and use of loading zones for school vehicles.

(3) Where a loading zone is available, a school vehicle driver, unless otherwise required for safety, may not stop on the roadway for the purpose of receiving or discharging passengers, but shall use the loading zone for this purpose.

(g) Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section, a driver of a school vehicle shall stop on the roadway to:

(1) Receive passengers when transporting them to school; or

(2) Discharge passengers when transporting them from school.

(H) (1) IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER WARNING DEVICE REQUIRED OR AUTHORIZED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE, A SCHOOL VEHICLE MAY BE EQUIPPED WITH A FLASHING ADVISORY SIGN TO WARN DRIVERS OF OTHER VEHICLES OF THE PRESENCE OF THE SCHOOL VEHICLE WHEN IT IS ABOUT TO ENGAGE IN ACTIVITY THAT REQUIRES UNUSUAL CARE IN APPROACHING, OVERTAKING, OR PASSING THE SCHOOL VEHICLE.

(2) A REAR-FACING FLASHING ADVISORY SIGN SHALL:

(I) BE MOUNTED ON THE REAR OF THE SCHOOL VEHICLE IN AN AREA THAT DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH COMPLIANCE WITH THIS TITLE;

(II) BE SEALED AND WEATHERTIGHT;

(III) BE 23.5 BY 8.75 BY 1.5 INCHES IN SIZE;

(IV) BE CONNECTED TO AND CONTROLLED BY THE ALTERNATELY FLASHING SAFETY LIGHTS, THE HAZARD LIGHTS, AND THE BACK-UP LIGHTS;

(V) DISPLAY A WARNING IN AMBER LETTERS BY ALTERNATELY FLASHING THE WORDS "CAUTION" AND "STOPPING" WHEN THE AMBER ALTERNATELY FLASHING SAFETY LIGHTS ARE ACTIVATED;

1 (VI) DISPLAY A WARNING IN RED LETTERS BY ALTERNATELY
2 FLASHING THE WORDS "STOP" AND "DO NOT PASS" WHEN THE RED ALTERNATIVELY
3 FLASHING SAFETY LIGHTS ARE ACTIVATED;

4 (VII) DISPLAY A WARNING IN AMBER LETTERS BY ALTERNATELY
5 FLASHING THE WORDS "CAUTION" AND "STOPPING" WHEN THE HAZARD LIGHTS ARE
6 ACTIVATED;

7 (VIII) DISPLAY A WARNING IN AMBER LETTERS BY FLASHING
8 THE WORD "CAUTION" WHEN THE BACK-UP LIGHTS ARE ACTIVATED;

9 (IX) DISPLAY LETTERS THAT ARE AT LEAST 1.5 INCHES TALL;

10 (X) HAVE A MINIMUM VIEWING ANGLE OF 15 DEGREES ON EACH
11 SIDE OF THE PERPENDICULAR AXIS OF THE VEHICLE; AND

12 (XI) BE CLEARLY VISIBLE IN DIRECT SUNLIGHT FROM A
13 DISTANCE OF 500 FEET ALONG THE AXIS OF THE SCHOOL VEHICLE.

14 (3) REGARDLESS OF THE TYPE OF LIGHTING USED FOR
15 ILLUMINATION, EACH WARNING DISPLAYED BY A FLASHING ADVISORY SIGN SHALL
16 INCLUDE A COMPLETE LIGHT QUALITY ARRANGEMENT TO FULLY AND CLEARLY
17 CONVEY THE INTENDED WARNING TO APPROACHING DRIVERS.

18 (4) A FLASHING ADVISORY SIGN THAT DISPLAYS WARNINGS TO
19 OTHER DRIVERS MAY BE PLACED ON THE FRONT OF A SCHOOL VEHICLE IF:

20 (I) A FLASHING ADVISORY SIGN HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE
21 REAR OF THE SCHOOL VEHICLE;

22 (II) THE FRONT-FACING FLASHING ADVISORY SIGN IS
23 CONNECTED TO AND CONTROLLED BY ONLY THE AMBER AND RED ALTERNATELY
24 FLASHING SAFETY LIGHTS;

25 (III) THE FRONT-FACING FLASHING ADVISORY SIGN DISPLAYS
26 THE SAME MESSAGE AS THE REAR-FACING FLASHING ADVISORY SIGN WHEN THE
27 AMBER OR RED ALTERNATELY FLASHING LIGHTS ARE ACTIVATED; AND

28 (IV) THE FRONT-FACING SIGN IS MOUNTED BELOW THE
29 WINDSHIELD, VERTICALLY CENTERED, AND DOES NOT CREATE A VISION
30 OBSTRUCTION FOR THE DRIVER OF THE SCHOOL VEHICLE.

1 **(5) FLASHING ADVISORY SIGNS SHALL BE:**

2 **(I) UNIFORM STATEWIDE IN DESIGN AND OPERATION; AND**

3 **(II) PROPERLY MAINTAINED AND OPERATED IN ACCORDANCE**
4 **WITH THE MANUFACTURER'S GUIDELINES.**

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
6 1, 2018.