

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 1262 (Delegate Parrott)
 Environment and Transportation

Vehicle Laws - Driving in Right-Hand Lanes

This bill requires a driver of a vehicle traveling slower than the general speed of traffic on a roadway divided into two or more clearly marked lanes (for traffic traveling in the same direction) to drive in the right-hand lane or lanes, if practicable as determined by the driver. The Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) must include the requirement in the State’s driver education curriculum, and the State Highway Administration (SHA) must inform drivers of the requirement by placing and maintaining signs at regular intervals on appropriate highways and through the dynamic message sign system located throughout the State. By December 1, 2022, MVA and SHA must report jointly to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee and the House Environment and Transportation Committee on efforts made to provide driver education and notice throughout the State as required under the bill.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures increase by approximately \$250,000 in fiscal 2021 only. Implementation and enforcement can otherwise be handled with existing resources. General fund revenues are not materially affected.

| (in dollars) | FY 2021 | FY 2022 | FY 2023 | FY 2024 | FY 2025 |
|----------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Revenues | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| SF Expenditure | 250,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Net Effect | (\$250,000) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: Enforcement can be handled with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: On every roadway, any vehicle going at least 10 miles per hour below the applicable maximum speed limit or at less than the normal speed of traffic under existing conditions generally must be driven in the right-hand lane then available for traffic or as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway. The requirement to keep right does not apply when overtaking and passing another vehicle going in the same direction or when preparing for a lawful left turn. A violation is a misdemeanor subject to a maximum fine of \$500. Upon conviction, MVA must assess one point against the driver's license, or three points for a violation that contributes to an accident. The District Court assesses a prepayment penalty of \$90 for this offense or \$130 if the offense contributes to an accident.

Background: According to data provided by the District Court, in fiscal 2019, there were 65 citations issued statewide for failure to keep right while driving below the speed limit or normal speed of traffic.

State Expenditures: The bill requires SHA to place and maintain signs at regular intervals on appropriate highways informing drivers of the bill's requirement. SHA anticipates installing 250 signs under the bill at an estimated cost of \$1,000 per sign. Accordingly, TTF expenditures increase by \$250,000 in fiscal 2021 only. MVA can update the State's driver education curriculum and driver education materials with existing budgeted resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

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mm/aad

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