

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 164
Economic Matters

(Harford County Delegation)

Finance

Harford County - Motorcycles - Sunday Sales

This bill authorizes a vehicle dealer in Harford County to sell, barter, deliver, give away, show, or offer for sale a motorcycle or certificate of title for a motorcycle on Sundays. The existing prohibition against Sunday sales for other motor vehicles in the county is otherwise unchanged. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2020.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local government finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: Potential meaningful.

Analysis

Current Law: Except in Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s counties, a new or used automobile dealer may not sell, barter, deliver, give away, show, or offer for sale a motor vehicle or certificate of title for a motor vehicle on a Sunday. Charles County commissioners may adopt an ordinance allowing Sunday sales. In Baltimore City, used car dealers can choose to sell vehicles on either Saturdays or Sundays.

Motorcycle sales are allowed on Sundays in Anne Arundel, Wicomico, and Worcester counties. In Anne Arundel County, a dealer may also sell or show new or used trailers or mobile homes.

Except in Wicomico County, which does not have a specific criminal or civil penalty, a car dealer who violates the above provisions is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of up to \$10,000.

Background: Automobile dealers are generally open six days a week for 12 or more hours per day. The Maryland Automobile Dealers Association has advised in the past that most dealers in the State believe that being open on Sundays does not result in an increase in sales. However, dealers may feel the need to be open on Sundays if the dealers operate in an area where competition exists with dealerships that operate on Sundays. Dealers in Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties compete with dealers in Virginia (where Sunday sales are permitted) and are exempted from the blue laws.

Small Business Effect: Many vehicle dealers are small businesses. As noted above, most dealers believe that being open an extra day each week does not necessarily result in an overall increase in sales. For example, many motorcycle dealers in Anne Arundel County, which currently allows Sunday sales, are nevertheless closed on Sundays. However, the bill may allow Harford County dealerships to compete for Sunday sales business. The effect on any particular dealership is unknown but could be meaningful.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 507 of 2019, a similar bill, passed both houses with amendments, but differences between the two versions of the bill were not resolved.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Harford County; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 2, 2020
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