

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 312

(Senator Eckardt)

Judicial Proceedings

Environment and Transportation

**Motor Vehicle Registration - Exception for Golf Carts - Hoopers Island and
Taylors Island**

This bill authorizes a person to operate a golf cart equipped with approved lighting on Upper or Middle Hoopers Island or Taylors Island in Dorchester County between dawn and dusk on a highway on which the maximum posted speed limit does not exceed 30 miles per hour. The County Council of Dorchester County may designate by resolution highways on Upper or Middle Hoopers Island or Taylors Island on which a golf cart may be operated.

The golf cart must be kept as far to the right of the roadway as feasible, and the driver must have a valid driver's license. A golf cart operating pursuant to the bill's authorization is exempt from the general requirement that each motor vehicle driven on a highway in the State be registered.

Fiscal Summary

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

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

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Each motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer driven on a highway must be registered. Certain motor vehicles are exempt from this requirement, including certain snowmobiles in Allegany and Garrett counties and certain golf carts in Allegany County, on Smith Island, in the City of Crisfield in Somerset County, in the

community of Golden Beach Patuxent Knolls in St. Mary's County, and in the Town of Vienna in Dorchester County.

A "motor vehicle" is defined as a vehicle that, unless otherwise specifically exempted, is self-propelled or propelled by electric power obtained from overhead electrical wires and not operated on rails. Certain vehicles, such as low-speed vehicles, bicycles, and motor scooters, are restricted to certain highways based on the maximum posted speed limit; they may be subject to different rules of the road than passenger cars and trucks.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: SB 94 of 2020, as amended, passed the Senate and was referred to the House Environment and Transportation Committee, but no further action was taken. Its cross file, HB 23, received a hearing in the House Environment and Transportation Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: HB 279 (Dorchester County Delegation) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 15, 2021
rh/ljm Third Reader - February 2, 2021

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