

Chapter 609

(House Bill 219)

AN ACT concerning

St. Mary’s County – ~~Motor Vehicle Registration – Exception for~~ Golf Carts on Public Highways – Report

FOR the purpose of ~~creating an exception from motor vehicle registration requirements for golf carts in St. Mary’s County; authorizing the St. Mary’s County Board of Commissioners, subject to a certain limitation, to designate the county highways on which a person may operate a golf cart; establishing certain requirements and limitations for the operation of golf carts in St. Mary’s County~~ requiring the St. Mary’s County Board of County Commissioners to produce a report recommending and describing the areas of St. Mary’s County that the County Board considers appropriate for the operation of unregistered golf carts on public highways, subject to certain standards; requiring the County Board to submit the report to certain entities of the General Assembly by a certain date; and generally relating to an ~~exception to motor vehicle registration requirements for~~ golf carts on public highways in St. Mary’s County.

~~BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Transportation
Section 13 – 402(a)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2020 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)~~

~~BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Transportation
Section 13 – 402(e)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2020 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)~~

~~BY adding to
Article – Transportation
Section 21 – 104.7
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2020 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)~~

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

(a) The St. Mary’s County Board of County Commissioners shall produce a report recommending and describing the areas of St. Mary’s County that the County Board considers appropriate for the operation of unregistered golf carts on public highways, subject to the standards established in this section.

(b) An area appropriate for the operation of golf carts on public highways shall:

(1) be an isolated area on an island or a peninsula bordering the Chesapeake Bay or its tidal tributaries;

(2) have available significant public docking facilities or private docking facilities available to the public that would facilitate visitors to the area arriving by boat;

(3) be viable as a destination for the boating public as part of a network of tourist attractions throughout the Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries;

(4) have available for visitors shopping, sightseeing, dining, charter fishing, beaches, pools, or water parks, or other attractions; and

(5) preferably contain no State highways or highways with a speed limit that exceeds 30 miles per hour.

(c) The report required under this section shall include a detailed map of any areas the County Board considers appropriate for the operation of unregistered golf carts on public highways, including a delineation of all public highways contained within the area.

(d) By December 1, 2023, the County Board shall submit the report, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, to:

(1) the House Environment and Transportation Committee;

(2) the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee; and

(3) the St. Mary's County Delegation to the General Assembly.

~~Article — Transportation~~

~~13-402~~

~~(a) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section or elsewhere in the Maryland Vehicle Law, each motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer driven on a highway shall be registered under this subtitle.~~

~~(2) If a motor vehicle required to be registered under this subtitle is not registered, a person may not park the unregistered motor vehicle on any:~~

~~(i) Public alley, street, or highway; or~~

~~(ii) Private property used by the public in general, including parking lots of shopping centers, condominiums, apartments, or town house developments.~~

~~(3) The provisions of paragraph (2) of this subsection do not apply to a motor vehicle that is exempt from registration under this section or § 13-402.1 of this subtitle.~~

~~(e) Registration under this subtitle is not required for:~~

~~(1) A vehicle that is driven on a highway:~~

~~(i) In conformity with the provisions of this title relating to manufacturers, transporters, dealers, secured parties, owners or operators of special mobile equipment, or nonresidents; or~~

~~(ii) Under a temporary registration card issued by the Administration;~~

~~(2) A vehicle owned and used by the United States, unless an authorized officer or employee of the United States requests registration of the vehicle;~~

~~(3) A farm tractor or any farm equipment;~~

~~(4) A vehicle the front or rear wheels of which are lifted from the highway;~~

~~(5) A towed vehicle that is attached to the towing vehicle by a tow bar and for which no driver is necessary;~~

~~(6) A vehicle owned by and in the possession of a licensed dealer for purpose of sale;~~

~~(7) A vehicle owned by a new resident of this State during the first 60 days of residency provided the vehicle displays valid registration issued by the jurisdiction of the resident's former domicile;~~

~~(8) New vehicles being operated as part of a shuttle, as defined in § 13-626 of this title, while following a registered vehicle displaying a shuttle permit issued by the Administration;~~

~~(9) A vehicle operated in connection with maritime commerce exclusively within any terminal owned or leased by the Maryland Port Administration;~~

~~(10) A snowmobile that is operated on highways and roadways as prescribed by § 25-102(a)(14) of this article;~~

~~(11) A golf cart that is operated on a highway on Smith Island, provided that the golf cart is equipped with lighting devices as required by the Administration if it is operated on a highway between dusk and dawn;~~

~~(12) A golf cart that is operated on a highway in accordance with § 21-104.2, § 21-104.3, § 21-104.4, [or] § 21-104.6, OR § 21-104.7 of this article;~~

~~(13) A golf cart that is operated on an Allegany County highway as allowed by the county under § 25-102(a)(16) of this article;~~

~~(14) A vehicle owned by an accredited consular or diplomatic officer of a foreign government and operated for official or personal purposes when the vehicle displays a valid diplomatic license plate issued by the United States government; or~~

~~(15) A personal delivery device that is operated on a roadway, sidewalk, shoulder, or crosswalk in accordance with § 21-104.5 of this article.~~

~~21-104.7.~~

~~(A) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY IN GOLDEN BEACH PATUXENT KNOLLS, FOR WHICH THE OPERATION OF GOLF CARTS IS GOVERNED UNDER § 21-104.3 OF THIS SUBTITLE.~~

~~(B) THE ST. MARY'S COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MAY DESIGNATE ANY COUNTY HIGHWAY WHERE THE MAXIMUM POSTED SPEED LIMIT DOES NOT EXCEED 35 MILES PER HOUR AS A HIGHWAY ON WHICH A PERSON MAY OPERATE A GOLF CART WITHOUT REGISTRATION AS AUTHORIZED UNDER § 13-402(C)(12) OF THIS ARTICLE.~~

~~(C) A PERSON WHO OPERATES A GOLF CART ON A HIGHWAY DESIGNATED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION:~~

~~(1) MAY OPERATE THE GOLF CART ONLY:~~

~~(i) BETWEEN DAWN AND DUSK; AND~~

~~(ii) IF THE GOLF CART IS EQUIPPED WITH LIGHTING DEVICES AS REQUIRED BY THE ADMINISTRATION;~~

~~(2) SHALL KEEP THE GOLF CART AS FAR TO THE RIGHT OF THE ROADWAY AS FEASIBLE; AND~~

~~(3) MUST POSSESS A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE.~~

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2023.

Approved by the Governor, May 8, 2023.