

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 963

(Senator Benson, *et al.*)

Finance

Transportation - Study on Speed Limits - Interstate 495 and Connected Highways

This bill requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to conduct a study on the implications of speed limit changes on highways in the State that connect to I-495. In conducting the study, MDOT must consult with local officials and stakeholders that have expertise and familiarity with traffic safety issues faced by drivers who use highways in the State that connect to I-495. MDOT must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2023. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023, and terminates June 30, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures increase by \$165,000 in FY 2024 only to complete the required study. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditure	165,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$165,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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

Local Effect: Local governments can cooperate with MDOT as necessary and appropriate using existing budgeted resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The study on the implications of speed limit changes on highways in the State that connect to I-495 must:

- identify the highways in the State that connect to I-495;
- identify the speed limits on the highways in the State that connect to I-495;
- analyze the traffic congestion over the past five years at locations where highways in the State connect to I-495;
- analyze the prevalence of speeding tickets over the past five years at locations where highways in the State connect to I-495;
- analyze the prevalence of accidents over the past five years at locations where highways in the State connect to I-495;
- analyze other hazards and incidents over the past five years at locations where highways in the State connect to I-495;
- analyze existing speed limits on the highways in the State that connect to I-495;
- analyze the feasibility of requiring the speed limit to deviate by only five miles per hour at locations where a highway in the State connects to I-495; and
- if feasible, recommend measures for requiring the speed limit to deviate by only five miles per hour at locations where a highway in the State connects to I-495.

Current Law: As a modal unit within MDOT, the State Highway Administration (SHA) is responsible for more than 5,200 miles or approximately 16,800 lane miles of road, 2,500 bridges, 3,500 small stream crossing structures, and 80 miles of sound/noise barriers in the State. It also has responsibility for planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads and bridges to safety and performance standards while considering sociological, ecological, and economic concerns.

State Expenditures: In the execution of its duties, MDOT and SHA often engage expert consultants to handle research, evaluations, studies, and staffing duties, and MDOT anticipates engaging a consultant to complete the study required the bill. Therefore, TTF expenditures increase by \$165,000 in fiscal 2024 only to hire a consultant to complete the study.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Municipal League; Department of Legislative Services

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rh/lgc

Analysis by: Richard L. Duncan

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510