

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2023 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 374

(Charles County Senators)

Judicial Proceedings

**Motor Vehicle Registration - Exceptions for Golf Carts and Low Speed Vehicles -
Cobb Island**

This bill authorizes a person to operate a golf cart or low-speed vehicle equipped with approved lighting on Cobb Island in Charles County between dawn and dusk on a highway on which the maximum posted speed limit does not exceed 30 miles per hour. The golf cart or low-speed vehicle 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 or low-speed vehicle 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. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.**

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, in the Town of Vienna in Dorchester County, and on Hoopers Island and Taylors Island.

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: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 76 of 2022.

Designated Cross File: HB 948 (Charles County Delegation) - Environment and Transportation.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 13, 2023
km/lgc

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