

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 915 (Senator Hettleman)
Judicial Proceedings

**Baltimore County - Vehicle Laws - Private Roadways in Residential Subdivisions
and Communities**

This bill specifies that a person may not violate any provision of the Maryland Vehicle Law while driving on a private roadway located within a residential subdivision or community in Baltimore County. Furthermore, the bill authorizes a police officer in Baltimore County to enforce the provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law on any such private roadway that is used for vehicular travel by residents.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill is authorizing in nature for Baltimore County. Accordingly, the impact on county finances depends on the extent of the Baltimore County Police Department's (BCPD) enforcement activities, as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: In general, a driver is only subject to the Maryland Vehicle Law when driving a vehicle on a State "highway" (as defined under § 11-127 of the Transportation Article). However, a person is still subject to the Maryland Vehicle Law while driving (1) on any private property that is used by the public in general; (2) in Calvert County *only*, on a private road located within a residential subdivision or community, or (3) in any place other than a highway that is specifically provided for under State law.

A police officer is authorized to enforce the provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law, or applicable local traffic laws or regulations, on any highway in the State. Additionally, a police officer is authorized, in Calvert County *only*, to enforce the Maryland Vehicle Law on a private roadway located within a residential subdivision or community that is used for vehicular travel by residents.

Local Fiscal Effect: BCPD advises that it would need to hire an additional 50 to 60 police officers to adequately patrol private roadways and otherwise enforce the bill. However, the Department of Legislative Services advises that the bill is *authorizing* in nature and does not *require* BCPD to conduct additional enforcement. Thus, Baltimore County finances are only affected to the extent that BCPD chooses to dedicate resources to enforcing the Maryland Vehicle Law on specified private roadways in the county.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: HB 528 (Delegate Stein, *et al.*) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Baltimore County; Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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