

HOUSE BILL 474

R5

6lr0831
CF 6lr1678

By: **Delegates Patterson, Korman, Harrison, and Turner**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws – Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice – Removal From**
3 **Exposed Vehicle Surfaces**
4 **(Clear Before You Drive Act)**

5 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from operating or towing a vehicle without
6 removing from exposed vehicle surfaces accumulated snow and ice; prohibiting a
7 person from committing a violation of this Act that contributes to an accident
8 resulting in property damage or the death of or serious bodily injury to another
9 person; and generally relating to the removal of snow and ice from exposed vehicle
10 surfaces.

11 BY adding to
12 Article – Transportation
13 Section 21–1135
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

18 **Article – Transportation**

19 **21–1135.**

20 **(A) IN THIS SECTION, “EXPOSED VEHICLE SURFACE” INCLUDES FOR A**
21 **VEHICLE:**

22 **(1) THE HOOD;**

23 **(2) THE TRUNK;**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(3) THE WINDSHIELD;

(4) EACH WINDOW;

(5) THE ROOF;

(6) THE CAB OF A COMMERCIAL OR NONCOMMERCIAL TRUCK; AND

(7) THE TOP OF:

(I) A TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER BEING TOWED BY A MOTOR VEHICLE; AND

(II) A COMMERCIAL TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER.

(B) (1) A PERSON MAY NOT OPERATE OR TOW A VEHICLE WITHOUT REMOVING FROM EXPOSED VEHICLE SURFACES, BEFORE OPERATION OR TOWING, ACCUMULATED SNOW AND ICE THAT POSES A THREAT TO PERSONS OR PROPERTY.

(2) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, A POLICE OFFICER MAY ENFORCE PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION ONLY AS A SECONDARY ACTION WHEN THE POLICE OFFICER DETAINS A DRIVER OF A MOTOR VEHICLE FOR A SUSPECTED VIOLATION OF ANOTHER PROVISION OF THE CODE.

(3) (I) A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF A VIOLATION OF PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION WHILE OPERATING OR TOWING A NONCOMMERCIAL VEHICLE IS SUBJECT TO:

1. FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$25;

2. FOR A SECOND OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$50;

3. FOR A THIRD OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$100; AND

4. FOR A FOURTH OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$200.

(II) A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF A VIOLATION OF PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION WHILE OPERATING OR TOWING A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE IS SUBJECT TO:

1. FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$75;

- 1 2. FOR A SECOND OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$150;
- 2 3. FOR A THIRD OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$300;
- 3 4. FOR A FOURTH OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$600; AND
- 4 5. FOR A FIFTH OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, A FINE OF
- 5 \$1,000.

6 (c) (1) A PERSON MAY NOT COMMIT A VIOLATION OF SUBSECTION (B)(1)

7 OF THIS SECTION THAT CONTRIBUTES TO AN ACCIDENT THAT RESULTS IN

8 PROPERTY DAMAGE OR THE DEATH OF OR, AS DEFINED IN § 20-102 OF THIS

9 ARTICLE, SERIOUS BODILY INJURY TO ANOTHER PERSON.

10 (2) A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF A VIOLATION OF PARAGRAPH (1)

11 OF THIS SUBSECTION IS SUBJECT TO:

12 (i) FOR A VIOLATION THAT OCCURRED WHILE OPERATING OR

13 TOWING A NONCOMMERCIAL VEHICLE, A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN \$200 AND NOT

14 MORE THAN \$1,000; OR

15 (ii) FOR A VIOLATION THAT OCCURRED WHILE OPERATING OR

16 TOWING A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE, A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN \$500 AND NOT MORE

17 THAN \$1,500.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect

19 October 1, 2026.