

HOUSE BILL 474

R5

6lr0831
CF SB 698

By: Delegates Patterson, Korman, Harrison, and Turner ~~Turner, Allen, Behler,~~
Foley, Lewis, T. Morgan, Odom, Stein, and Ziegler

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 22, 2026

CHAPTER _____

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, subject to
6 certain exceptions, without ~~removing~~ making reasonable efforts to remove from
7 exposed vehicle surfaces accumulated snow and ice; prohibiting a person from
8 committing a violation of this Act that contributes to an accident resulting in
9 property damage or the death of or serious bodily injury to another person; and
10 generally relating to the removal of snow and ice from exposed vehicle 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.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 (A) IN THIS SECTION, "EXPOSED VEHICLE SURFACE" INCLUDES FOR A
2 VEHICLE:

3 (1) THE HOOD;

4 (2) THE TRUNK;

5 (3) THE WINDSHIELD;

6 (4) EACH WINDOW;

7 (5) THE ROOF;

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

9 (7) THE TOP OF:

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

12 (II) A COMMERCIAL TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER.

13 (B) (1) (I) ~~A~~ EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS
14 PARAGRAPH, A PERSON MAY NOT OPERATE OR TOW A VEHICLE WITHOUT REMOVING
15 MAKING REASONABLE EFFORTS TO REMOVE FROM EXPOSED VEHICLE SURFACES,
16 BEFORE OPERATION OR TOWING, ACCUMULATED SNOW AND ICE THAT POSES A
17 THREAT TO PERSONS OR PROPERTY.

18 (II) THE PROHIBITION UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS
19 PARAGRAPH DOES NOT APPLY IF COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROHIBITION WOULD:

20 1. CAUSE THE OPERATOR OF THE VEHICLE TO VIOLATE
21 ANY LAW OR REGULATION REGARDING WORKPLACE SAFETY; OR

22 2. THREATEN THE HEALTH OR SAFETY OF THE
23 OPERATOR OF THE VEHICLE.

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

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

- 4 **1. FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$25;**
- 5 **2. FOR A SECOND OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$50;**
- 6 **3. FOR A THIRD OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$100; AND**
- 7 **4. FOR A FOURTH OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, A FINE OF**
8 **\$200.**

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

- 12 **1. FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$75;**
- 13 **2. FOR A SECOND OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$150;**
- 14 **3. FOR A THIRD OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$300;**
- 15 **4. FOR A FOURTH OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$600; AND**
- 16 **5. FOR A FIFTH OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, A FINE OF**
17 **\$1,000.**

18 **(III) 1. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSUBPARAGRAPH 2 OF**
19 **THIS SUBPARAGRAPH, EACH DAY THAT A VIOLATION OCCURS OR CONTINUES IS A**
20 **SEPARATE VIOLATION OF PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.**

21 **2. A PERSON MAY NOT BE FOUND TO HAVE VIOLATED**
22 **PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION MORE THAN ONCE IN ANY 24-HOUR PERIOD.**

23 **(C) (1) A PERSON MAY NOT COMMIT A VIOLATION OF SUBSECTION (B)(1)**
24 **OF THIS SECTION THAT CONTRIBUTES TO AN ACCIDENT THAT RESULTS IN**
25 **PROPERTY DAMAGE OR THE DEATH OF OR, AS DEFINED IN § 20-102 OF THIS**
26 **ARTICLE, SERIOUS BODILY INJURY TO ANOTHER PERSON.**

27 **(2) A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF A VIOLATION OF PARAGRAPH (1)**
28 **OF THIS SUBSECTION IS SUBJECT TO:**

1 (I) FOR A VIOLATION THAT OCCURRED WHILE OPERATING OR
2 TOWING A NONCOMMERCIAL VEHICLE, A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN \$200 AND NOT
3 MORE THAN \$1,000; OR

4 (II) FOR A VIOLATION THAT OCCURRED WHILE OPERATING OR
5 TOWING A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE, A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN \$500 AND NOT MORE
6 THAN \$1,500.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 October 1, 2026.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.