

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 591

(Delegate Beauchamp, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Wicomico County - Highway Pedestrian Safety Act

This bill prohibits, in Wicomico County, a person from standing in a roadway, shoulder, median divider, or intersection determined by the county or a municipality in the county to be inherently dangerous. The bill prohibits a police officer from issuing a citation for violating this prohibition unless (1) the inherently dangerous roadway, shoulder, median divider, or intersection has appropriate signs installed that notify the public that a person may not stand in that area, and (2) the signs are installed in accordance with the manual and specifications for a uniform system of traffic control devices adopted by the State Highway Administration. **The bill takes effect June 1, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: The bill is not expected to materially affect Wicomico County operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Except for the occupant of a disabled vehicle who seeks the aid of another vehicle, a person may not stand in a roadway to solicit a ride, employment, or business from an occupant of any vehicle. Further, a person is prohibited from standing on or near a highway to solicit any other person to guard any vehicle while it is parked or about to be parked on the highway.

In Calvert, Carroll, Charles, Harford, and Washington counties, a person may not stand in a roadway, median divider, or intersection to solicit money or donations of any kind from the occupant of a vehicle.

In Anne Arundel County, a person may not stand in a highway to solicit money or donations of any kind from the occupant of a vehicle or advertise any message.

In Howard County, a person may not stand in a State highway or the highway right-of-way to solicit money or donations of any kind from the occupant of a vehicle.

In Prince George's County, a person may not stand in a highway to solicit money or donations of any kind from the occupant of a vehicle. An adult may not cause, encourage, allow, or petition a child younger than age 15 to engage in such activity.

In Allegany and Cecil counties, the county governing body or a municipality is authorized to adopt a permit program for roadside solicitation. A person is prohibited from standing in a roadway, median divider, or intersection to solicit money or donations from occupants of motor vehicles (without a valid permit) and from causing, encouraging, allowing, or petitioning others to do so. An individual or a representative of a qualified organization who is at least age 18 may obtain a permit from the county governing body or a municipality, upon submitting proof of a plan to safely solicit donations. Only one permit per individual or organization can be issued in a calendar year, and statute limits the duration of the permits.

In Baltimore and Montgomery counties, the county council is authorized to enact a permit program to allow a person to stand in a roadway, median divider, or intersection to solicit money or donations from the occupant of a vehicle if the permit program meets specified conditions.

In Frederick County, the county or a municipality is authorized to enact a permit program allowing a person to stand in a roadway, median divider, or intersection to solicit money or donations from the occupant of a vehicle. If the county or municipality enacts an ordinance establishing a permit program, the ordinance must require a person seeking a permit to file an application containing the following information: (1) the date, time, and location of the solicitation; (2) the manner and conditions under which the solicitation is to occur; and (3) the name, address, and telephone number of a contact person of the employing or sponsoring person, agency, or entity on whose behalf the solicitation is to be made, who will be able to provide additional information to the county, municipality, or the designee of the county or municipality. The county or municipality must approve the application within five days after the application is filed and may impose conditions on the solicitation.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 101 and HB 320 of 2025 and SB 961 and HB 1312 of 2024.

Designated Cross File: SB 367 (Senators Carozza and Mautz) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 6, 2026

sj/tso

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