

March 2, 2023

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 928 – Motor Vehicles – Off-the-Road Motorcycles – Local Regulation and Enforcement

Dear Chair Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 928 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

House Bill 928 authorizes counties and local jurisdictions to create a registration process for certain off-the-road vehicles. The proposed legislation further allows enforcement of registration requirements and other Maryland vehicle laws related to legal operation of such off-the-road vehicles, including impoundment.

The MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) currently requires an Off-Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV) to be titled by the owner and issues a sticker for the owner to display on the rear of the vehicle. Law enforcement uses information on the title sticker to identify the vehicle within MVA records. No vehicle registration is issued because the vehicles are not considered roadworthy. However, the MVA has no enforcement method by which it can compel an owner to title a newly acquired OHRV, though many dealers do provide this as a service when purchasing from them. If an OHRV is purchased via private sale or an out-of-state dealer, the required title is often not obtained by the owner.

As there is currently a process in place for these vehicles, efforts to ensure compliance of this requirement, rather than local registration requirements, could prevent potential owner confusion regarding multiple jurisdictional filings required by titling with the MVA and registering with a local jurisdiction. It would also ensure Statewide access to ownership information if an owner were to take an OHRV to another area of the State for use.

The MVA is highly supportive of efforts to ensure all roadway users, regardless of the mode of transportation, use Maryland roads and highways in a legal and safe manner.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 928.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer
Administrator
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration
410-787-7830

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090