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SPEAKER PRO TEM
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The Maryland House of Delegates
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Delegate Dana Stein Testimony in Support of HB 782
Vehicle Laws-Lighting-Privately Owned Vehicles

The Fire Police are volunteer fire department members who assist local volunteer fire companies. They report to the local Sheriff, and they can be called upon to assist with many different emergencies, from traffic control to looking for lost people. They provide a vital service to direct traffic at emergencies.

There are 365 volunteer fire/EMS/Rescue companies in the State of Maryland.

In 2023, there were 45 first responders (including law enforcement officers, safety service patrol operators, fire/EMS personnel, tow truck operators, and road service technicians) struck and killed in Maryland, and there have been 7 so far in 2024.

This bill would allow the volunteer Fire Police to use green LED lights on their vehicles can improve their visibility, especially in low light or poor weather conditions.

Red and Green *or* Red and White lights improved visibility and can enhance roadway safety at emergency scenes and differentiate between Fire Police and law enforcement vehicles.

Currently, these volunteers are only allowed to use red lights, which can blend into the background during emergencies.

Yet, the State of Maryland has recognized the effectiveness of green lights and have added the use of green lights, along with amber lights, to highway maintenance and service equipment. In addition to Maryland, Michigan, Texas, Missouri, and Wisconsin have added green lights to their state highway equipment.

There have also been studies that suggest that humans can differentiate more shades of green than any other color, because they have a longer wavelength than other colors, allowing them to penetrate through fog and other weather conditions more effectively, which enhances their visibility.

This bill would have no fiscal impact on the State.

I hope you will vote favorably on HB 782.