

Letter of Support SB 912.pdf

Uploaded by: Jerome Spencer

Position: FAV



Troy D. Berry
Sheriff

Office of the Sheriff

Charles County, Maryland

Headquarters
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La Plata, Maryland 20646-0189
301-609-6400



An Internationally
Accredited Agency

March 3, 2025

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

The Honorable Jeff Waldstreicher
Vice Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

Honorable Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

RE: **SB 912: Charles County – Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles**

Dear Chairman Smith and Vice Chair Waldstreicher:

The Charles County Sheriff's Office supports SB 912 entitled, Charles County – Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles.

For several years, Charles County has seen frequent misuse of off-road vehicles such as dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles. Our county has seen individuals engaged in reckless driving behavior on public roads – weaving in and out of traffic, “popping wheelies,” obstructing traffic, and generally placing our citizens in fear. We also see individuals driving off-road vehicles on private and public property without permission. Not only does this behavior violate the Criminal Law, it also causes extensive property damage.

From 2020 through 2024, the Sheriff's Office received **5, 236** calls relating to ATVs and dirt-bikes, including **1,076** in 2024 alone. As of February 27, the Sheriff's Office has seen **110** such calls in 2025.

Apprehending the individuals involved in this behavior poses challenges. Maryland law prohibits unregistered motor vehicles, such as all-terrain vehicles, from being operated on a highway. Despite that law, the Sheriff's Office has seen a growing trend of individuals operating off-road vehicles on our public roads in reckless and dangerous manners. These individuals often elude or attempt to elude police.

When officers are able to catch the individuals in the act, the vehicle they used may be towed to a private facility. In the absence of regulations allowing for the seizure of these vehicles, the owners are able to quickly recover the vehicle and officers repeatedly encounter the same individuals on the same vehicles engaged in the same behavior.

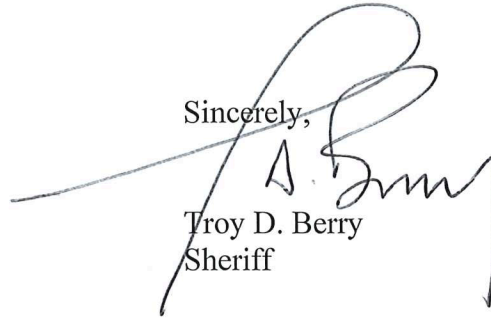
Recognizing the need for action, the Charles County Commissioners submitted a request to our local delegation for a statute that would authorize the Commissioners to implement rules and regulations relating to off-road vehicles. The most critical component of that request is the ability to allow for the impoundment of vehicles used to violate both the traffic law and criminal trespass law. SB 912 will give the Commissioners that authority.

This is, and has been, an issue of great concern for the citizens of Charles County. Passing SB 912 will

not, of course, end the problem, but SB 912 *will* give the County Commissioners a new tool that can be used to deter the behavior.

For these reasons, the Charles County Sheriff's Office requests a favorable report on SB 912. Thank you for the attention you are providing to this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Troy D. Berry', written over the printed name and title.

Troy D. Berry
Sheriff

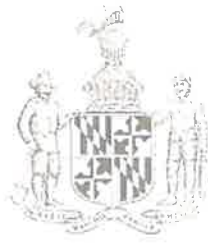
SB912DelegationLetter.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Jackson

Position: FAV

SENATOR ARTHUR ELLIS
SENATE CHAIR

SENATOR MICHAEL A. JACKSON



DELEGATE EDITH J. PATTERSON, ED.D.
HOUSE CHAIR

DELEGATE DEBRA DAVIS
DELEGATE ELIZABETH "SUSIE" PROCTOR
DELEGATE C. T. WILSON

THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
CHARLES COUNTY DELEGATION

Senate Bill 912: Charles County – Off Highway Recreational Vehicles – Regulation and Enforcement

February 25, 2025

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and esteemed members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

This letter is to advise the Budget and Taxation Committee that Senate Bill 912 was voted on by the Charles County Senators and received a unanimous favorable vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arthur Ellis".

Senator Arthur Ellis
Senate Chair, Charles County Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Jackson".

Senator Michael A. Jackson
Charles County Senator

SB912TestimonySubmit.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Jackson

Position: FAV

MICHAEL A. JACKSON
Legislative District 27
Calvert, Charles and
Prince George's Counties

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Pensions

Procurement

Chair, Public Safety, Transportation,
and Environment



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY – SENATE BILL 912

***CHARLES COUNTY – OFF-HIGHWAY RECREATIONAL
VEHICLES – REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT***

JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE

MARCH 5, 2025

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 912 is a Charles County local bill that authorizes the Board of Charles County Commissioners to adopt regulations on the operation of off-highway vehicles. The bill enables Charles County to require off-highway recreational vehicles to be registered with the county, to impose registration fees, to impose age restrictions on the use of these vehicles, and to impound vehicles that operate in violation of the law.

This legislation simply provides a means to the end of improving public safety in Charles County and finding a better way of protecting motorists and pedestrians from the negligent use of off-highway recreational vehicles.

This is a piece of local legislation that comes with the unanimous support of the Charles County Senate Delegation.

For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 912.

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Uploaded by: Reuben Collins

Position: FAV



Charles County Government

CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., *President*
Ralph E. Patterson, II, M.A., *Vice President*
Gilbert O. Bowling, III
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.
Amanda M. Stewart, Ed.D.

Mark Belton
County Administrator

March 5, 2025

Bill: Senate Bill 912 Charles County - Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles - Regulation and Enforcement
Committee: Senate– Judicial Proceedings
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Senator Smith, Vice Chairman Waldstreicher, and Members:

On behalf of the Charles County Commissioners, this letter is to express the support for SB 912 Charles County - Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles - Regulation and Enforcement.

Charles County has experienced a significant increase in complaints involving the operation of off-road vehicles on our public roads in a reckless and dangerous manner, potentially endangering the lives of the operators and bystanders. Additionally, operators often trespass on private property, in violation of the rights of our County's property owners.

While these vehicles are already illegal for use on public roadways and private property without the permission of the owner, violators have not been adequately deterred, and often times resume the prohibited activity in short order by immediately reclaiming their off-highway vehicles from private tow companies immediately for law enforcement intervention. Off-road motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles, when operated illegally, are a threat to other motor vehicles and pedestrians alike. For this reason, we support SB 912 as a positive step by the General Assembly to curtail this increasingly common and dangerous problem.

SB 912 thoughtfully includes violations of Maryland vehicle laws found in the Transportation Article, as well as trespass offenses found in the Criminal Law Article. With the enabling authority provided by SB 912, our Board of County Commissioners will be well-positioned to craft a local law to implement rules and regulations that will help keep Charles County residents and visitors safe.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our support for SB 912.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., consisting of stylized initials and a surname.

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President

cc: Charles County Delegation

SB0912 - MVA - LOI – Charles County – Off-Highway

Uploaded by: Matt Mickler

Position: INFO

March 5, 2025

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 912 – Charles County – Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles – Regulation and Enforcement

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 912 and offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

SB 912 authorizes Charles County to regulate off-highway recreational vehicle operation and requires that these vehicles be registered with the County and subject to impoundment for violations.

Maryland law requires off-road vehicles (ORV) to be titled with the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). From Fiscal Year 2022 to February 2024, MVA issued 27,828 titles for all off-road vehicles currently eligible for titles. The MVA issues a decal to applicants to place on the ORV to indicate the title; decals include the title number which can be looked up by certain individuals, such as law enforcement, who are provided access to the MVA’s vehicle database.

When an ORV is sold by the original owner, the new buyer is responsible for filing a title application with the MVA. While exact numbers are not available, it is estimated that a vast majority of these secondary sales tend to be via private sales rather than a retail store, and the new buyer is not necessarily aware that they are required to title the ORV. Further, there is not a viable means for the previous owner to cancel a title in their name with the MVA unless the new owner obtains a title once purchased under one of these secondary market transactions. In addition, many dirt bikes and other ORVs are sold by large chain stores that do not provide titling services or advise buyers of these requirements. As these stores are not licensed dealerships the way a vehicle dealer is, the MVA has no means to audit their sales and ensure compliance with requirements for titling services with purchases.

While these factors cause challenges for titling requirement compliance due to a lack of uniform knowledge or means to educate buyers on the titling process or necessity, the standards of having the MVA be the sole government authority in Maryland where vehicle titles and registrations are issued does provide a uniformity and certainty for operators, owners, and law enforcement. The proposed legislation in SB 912 would alter that dynamic, including for non-residents of Charles County who seek to operate ORVs within its jurisdiction.

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Page Two

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 912.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Matthew Mickler
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090