



HEARING DATE: February 19, 2026

BILL NO/TITLE: HB474: Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces (Clear Before You Drive Act)

COMMITTEE: House Environment & Transportation

POSITION: **Support with Amendments**

During the winter months snow and ice accumulates on the tops of all vehicles, including cars, trucks, trailers and buses. This accumulation of snow and ice potentially causes serious safety issues. During transit ice may dislodge from a vehicle, potentially causing property damage to other vehicles and injuring other motorists.

Unlike passenger cars, there are numerous challenges with removing snow and ice from large commercial vehicles. These include:

- Worker safety – there is substantial potential for a serious workers compensation injury or death due to slippage if a driver climbs on top of a truck or trailer. This also opens up numerous OSHA concerns.
- There are a lack of options available to remove snow and ice. Maryland has thousands of trucks and trailers registered in the state, not counting the thousands of vehicles that deliver or pass through from out of state. There will never be enough drive through scrapers, truck washes, etc. to accommodate the number of commercial vehicles on the road.
- Snow rakes or brooms are not effective for ice removal. They also create a workers' compensation risk from falling debris or shoulder injuries.
- Vehicles while in transit, parked waiting to load/unload on a shipper's property, or taking a mandatory rest brake may accumulate snow and ice with no opportunity for removal. In many cases shippers (including the Port of Baltimore) do not even allow a driver to exit his truck when he is picking up or dropping off a load.

Recognizing these challenges, the sponsor of the legislation is proposing amendments that would address some of the concerns that the trucking industry has raised. These amendments incorporate language from northeastern states that have passed similar legislation by ensuring drivers are not forced to take unsafe actions that may violate other workplace safety rules, and clarifying that no driver can be cited more than once in a 24 hour period for a violation so that he has time to clear his vehicle when he returns to a terminal or parks at a rest area since he cannot do so at roadside.

The passage of HB474 with the sponsor's amendments will make all drivers conscious of this safety issue, encouraging them to take steps to remove snow and ice. As such, MMTA respectfully asks the Committee to give this legislation a favorable report.

About Maryland Motor Truck Association: Maryland Motor Truck Association is a non-profit trade association that has represented the trucking industry since 1935. In service to its 900 members, MMTA is committed to support, advocate and educate for a safe, efficient and profitable trucking industry in Maryland.

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