

# HOUSE BILL 474

R5

6lr0831  
CF 6lr1678

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By: **Delegates Patterson, Korman, Harrison, and Turner**  
Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2026  
Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws – Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice – Removal From**  
3 **Exposed Vehicle Surfaces**  
4 **(Clear Before You Drive Act)**

5 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from operating or towing a vehicle, subject to certain  
6 exceptions, without  
7 ~~removing~~ making reasonable efforts to remove from exposed vehicle surfaces accumulated  
8 snow and ice; prohibiting a  
9 person from committing a violation of this Act that contributes to an accident  
10 resulting in property damage or the death of or serious bodily injury to another  
11 person; and generally relating to the removal of snow and ice from exposed vehicle  
12 surfaces.

11 BY adding to  
12 Article – Transportation  
13 Section 21–1135  
14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
15 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Transportation**

19 **21–1135.**

20 **(A) IN THIS SECTION, “EXPOSED VEHICLE SURFACE” INCLUDES FOR A**  
21 **VEHICLE:**

22 **(1) THE HOOD;**

23 **(2) THE TRUNK;**

2 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 474 as amended by HB0474/643429/1 02/17/26 at 10:22 AM

- 1 (3) THE WINDSHIELD;
- 2 (4) EACH WINDOW;
- 3 (5) THE ROOF;
- 4 (6) THE CAB OF A COMMERCIAL OR NONCOMMERCIAL TRUCK; AND
- 5 (7) THE TOP OF:

6 (I) A TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER BEING TOWED BY A MOTOR  
7 VEHICLE; AND

8 (II) A COMMERCIAL TRAILER OR SEMITRAILER.

9 (B) (1) ~~A (I)~~ EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, A  
10 PERSON MAY NOT OPERATE OR TOW A VEHICLE WITHOUT  
11 REMOVING MAKING REASONABLE EFFORTS TO REMOVE FROM EXPOSED VEHICLE SURFACES, BEFORE OPERATION  
OR TOWING,  
11 ACCUMULATED SNOW AND ICE THAT POSES A THREAT TO PERSONS OR PROPERTY.

(II) THE PROHIBITION UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH  
DOES NOT APPLY IF COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROHIBITION WOULD:

1. CAUSE THE OPERATOR OF THE VEHICLE TO VIOLATE ANY LAW OR  
REGULATION REGARDING WORKPLACE SAFETY; OR

2. THREATEN THE HEALTH OR SAFETY OF THE OPERATOR OF THE  
VEHICLE.

12 (2) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, A  
13 POLICE OFFICER MAY ENFORCE PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION ONLY AS A  
14 SECONDARY ACTION WHEN THE POLICE OFFICER DETAINS A DRIVER OF A MOTOR  
15 VEHICLE FOR A SUSPECTED VIOLATION OF ANOTHER PROVISION OF THE CODE.

16 (3) (I) A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF A VIOLATION OF  
17 PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION WHILE OPERATING OR TOWING A  
18 NONCOMMERCIAL VEHICLE IS SUBJECT TO:

- 19 1. FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$25;
- 20 2. FOR A SECOND OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$50;
- 21 3. FOR A THIRD OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$100; AND
- 22 4. FOR A FOURTH OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, A FINE OF  
23 \$200.

24 (II) A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF A VIOLATION OF  
25 PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION WHILE OPERATING OR TOWING A  
26 COMMERCIAL VEHICLE IS SUBJECT TO:

- 27 1. FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$75;

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- 1 2. FOR A SECOND OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$150;
- 2 3. FOR A THIRD OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$300;
- 3 4. FOR A FOURTH OFFENSE, A FINE OF \$600; AND
- 4 5. FOR A FIFTH OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, A FINE OF
- 5 \$1,000.

(III) 1. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSUBPARAGRAPH 2 OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH, EACH DAY THAT A VIOLATION OCCURS OR CONTINUES IS A SEPARATE VIOLATION OF PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

2. A PERSON MAY NOT BE FOUND TO HAVE VIOLATED PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION MORE THAN ONCE IN ANY 24-HOUR PERIOD.

6 (C) (1) A PERSON MAY NOT COMMIT A VIOLATION OF SUBSECTION (B)(1)  
7 OF THIS SECTION THAT CONTRIBUTES TO AN ACCIDENT THAT RESULTS IN  
8 PROPERTY DAMAGE OR THE DEATH OF OR, AS DEFINED IN § 20-102 OF THIS  
9 ARTICLE, SERIOUS BODILY INJURY TO ANOTHER PERSON.

10 (2) A PERSON WHO IS CONVICTED OF A VIOLATION OF PARAGRAPH (1)  
11 OF THIS SUBSECTION IS SUBJECT TO:

12 (I) FOR A VIOLATION THAT OCCURRED WHILE OPERATING OR  
13 TOWING A NONCOMMERCIAL VEHICLE, A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN \$200 AND NOT  
14 MORE THAN \$1,000; OR

15 (II) FOR A VIOLATION THAT OCCURRED WHILE OPERATING OR  
16 TOWING A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE, A FINE OF NOT LESS THAN \$500 AND NOT MORE  
17 THAN \$1,500.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
19 October 1, 2026.