

Written testimony SB912.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Lechlitner

Position: FAV

Written testimony “Favorable” for SB0912

Michael Lechlitner and the Maryland Collectible Auto Association

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I provide written testimony in support of SB0912 which if passed, would exempt vehicles that previously were registered as Historic (Class L) as of 1 July 2025 from required emissions testing.

There are several bills in both the House and Senate for this session that corrects this mistaken 1999 historical cut off and therefore re-instates the emissions exemption. Nevertheless, SB0912 when considered separately, has value the vehicle collector hobby needs.

Historic vehicles by law are not daily drivers. The 2025 law change reclaimed H-tags for vehicles manufactured after 1999 and forced emissions tests upon them. The State now requires emission inspections of previously exempt 2000-2005 vehicles placing undue hardship on the owners. The age of these vehicles makes parts and/or needed repair difficult. In addition, there are very rare or exotic previously H-tagged vehicles that State VEIP stations have no test data to even determine a “pass” or “fail”. These are often foreign imports or domestically built in small numbers. My own vehicle, a 2001 Panoz Esperante is one of only 350 built in the State of Georgia. VEIP doesn’t even have that manufacturer in their data base.

These hobbyists provide revenue to the State through tourism and Car Shows. The latter are often for charitable causes resulting in millions of dollars of donations.

This favorable testimony is also endorsed by the Maryland Collectible Auto Association and the Antique Auto Clubs of America.

Thank you for submitting this bill.

Written testimony submitted 6 March, 2026.

MDE SB 912 LOC.pdf

Uploaded by: Jeremy D Baker

Position: INFO



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

Senate Bill 912

***Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program - Exemption for Vehicles Formerly Registered as
Historic***

Position: Letter of Concern
Committee: Judicial Proceedings
Date: March 10, 2026
From: Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) offers the following **LETTER OF CONCERN** for SB 912.

Bill Summary

SB 912 would exempt a vehicle from the mandatory emissions inspection under the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP), provided the vehicle was previously registered as a “historic motor vehicle” prior to July 1, 2025. Furthermore, the legislation would allow a vehicle owner to self-certify, utilizing an approved form that the vehicle was registered as “historic” pursuant to §13-936 of the Transportation Article before July 1, 2025.

Key Points

VEIP is jointly administered by the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) and MDE. MVA is responsible for vehicle scheduling, motorist enforcement, overseeing program operations, and serving as the VEIP contract administrator, while MDE oversees program design, establishing test procedures and standards, administering quality assurance auditing, and overseeing related repair programs.

VEIP’s core mission is to control vehicle emissions, a major contributor to ground-level ozone, which adversely affects vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, and citizens with pre-existing respiratory diseases like asthma. By mandating regular testing and necessary repairs for non-compliant vehicles, VEIP plays a critical role in reducing overall emissions. Despite advancements in vehicle emissions technology and on-board diagnostics systems, an ongoing inspection program remains necessary due to vehicle wear, component malfunction, and the need for routine maintenance. This is especially critical for older vehicles, such as those with historic registrations, which are often kept in operation longer and whose emissions output tends to increase with age. VEIP is essential for ensuring these older vehicles perform optimally and contribute to the State’s clean air goals.

MDE appreciates the opportunity to offer this **LETTER OF CONCERN** for SB 912 and is available for questions.

Contact: Jeremy D. Baker, Director of Government Relations
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SB0912 - LOC -MVA - Exemption for Vehicles Formerl

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

March 10, 2026

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

RE: Letter of Concern – Senate Bill 912 – Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program - Exemption for Vehicles Formerly Registered as Historic

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

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

SB 912 would exempt a vehicle which was formerly registered as Class L (Historic) prior to July 1, 2025, and was no longer eligible following the effective date of Chapter 604 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2025 from having to participate in the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP). Owners would be required to self-certify their vehicle was previously registered as Class L and lost eligibility. However, SB 912 does not limit this exemption to the owner at the time the Class L vehicle lost eligibility and had to obtain alternative Class A, M, or E registration plates.

SB 912 would increase the administrative costs for operating the VEIP for the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). The creation of a unique subset of vehicles needing to be classified as eligible for an exemption throughout the life of the vehicle and regardless of owner would create potential points of conflict with customers trying to navigate the process as MVA staff work to accommodate these exemptions accurately. It also poses a conflict in fairness and equity in administering the VEIP as these vehicles should otherwise be subject to testing to ensure compliance with State clean air goals. The older the vehicle, the higher the likelihood its emissions systems are in need of repair to remain compliant in their use.

The Maryland VEIP is jointly administered by the MVA and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), with significant support by a contractor that performs vehicle testing and operates and maintains the network of test stations and kiosks. The MVA provides operational oversight and contract monitoring and is responsible for ensuring the highest level of customer service and that the contractor upholds the same standards. The MDE provides technical oversight and ensures program quality.

The VEIP has helped dramatically improve Maryland’s air quality since its implementation. The benefits of these improvements are demonstrated in reports issued by the MVA and do not negate the need for continued progress. Further, the VEIP is an important component of the State Implementation Plan required under the Federal Clean Air Act. Ensuring vehicles that are

regularly used on Maryland highways with a higher likelihood of required repairs needed for these important emissions systems is vital to ensure continued progress in improving air quality in the State.

The MVA understands the frustration of customers who have lost previous Class L registration eligibility for vehicles they do not in fact use on a daily basis. However, the MVA understands that some vehicles were potentially abusing the historic tag program by not adhering to the use limitations and continues to work with the General Assembly to provide technical feedback for equitable alternatives for all vehicle owners.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberation of Senate Bill 912.

Respectfully submitted,

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