

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 486 (Delegate Cox)
Environment and Transportation

Corporal William Kyle Ferrell Emergency Vehicle Safety Act

This bill more broadly authorizes a vehicle privately owned by specified emergency personnel to be equipped with red or white lights or signal devices for use only while at the scene of an accident or other emergency.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect governmental finances or operations.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local governmental finances or operations.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: Emergency personnel specified in the bill include (1) a firefighter; (2) an emergency medical technician; (3) a law enforcement officer; (4) a member of a rescue squad; (5) a member of a fire police squad; and (6) a member of the U.S. Armed Forces who is trained in emergency response.

Current Law: A person may not drive or move on any highway any vehicle or equipment that is equipped with or displays any light or signal device designed to emit an oscillating, rotating, blinking, or other type of emission of light unless authorized under State law. With specified exceptions, flashing lights are authorized only for use on an emergency vehicle, service vehicle, or school vehicle. A violation is a misdemeanor subject to a maximum fine of \$500. The prepayment penalty assessed by the District Court is \$60.

Vehicles of city, county, State, or federal fire departments or duly constituted volunteer fire departments or rescue squads, or the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System, may be equipped with or display red and/or white lights or signal devices. In each volunteer fire company, up to five specified officers may have their privately owned vehicles equipped with red lights or signal devices, which may be displayed only while on route to or at the scene of an emergency. Specified officers include (1) the fire chief or highest ranking fireline officer; (2) one or more of the assistant chiefs or deputy chiefs, whichever rank is second in command; and (3) the emergency medical services commander.

In addition, the fire police of each volunteer fire company may have their privately owned vehicles equipped with red lights or signal devices designed to emit an oscillating, rotating, blinking, or other type of emission of light. The lights or signal devices may be flashed or oscillated or otherwise used only while the vehicle is at the scene of an accident, flood, or other emergency to which the volunteer fire company is responding.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Garrett, Howard, and Montgomery counties; City of Havre de Grace; Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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mr/aad

Analysis by: Elizabeth J. Allison

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510