

# HOUSE BILL 645

E1, R1

1lr1735  
CF 1lr1736

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By: **Delegate Arentz**

Introduced and read first time: January 22, 2021

Assigned to: Judiciary

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Criminal Law – Disruption of Highway Usage – Prohibition**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from knowingly and without lawful purpose  
4 obstructing, hindering, impeding, or blocking the use of a highway; establishing  
5 certain penalties; making conforming changes; and generally relating to disrupting  
6 highway use.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
8 Article – Criminal Law  
9 Section 10–201  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

12 BY adding to  
13 Article – Criminal Law  
14 Section 10–206  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

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

19 **Article – Criminal Law**

20 10–201.

21 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

22 (2) (i) “Public conveyance” means a conveyance to which the public or a  
23 portion of the public has access to and a right to use for transportation.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (ii) "Public conveyance" includes an airplane, vessel, bus, railway  
2 car, school vehicle, and subway car.

3 (3) (i) "Public place" means a place to which the public or a portion of  
4 the public has access and a right to resort for business, dwelling, entertainment, or other  
5 lawful purpose.

6 (ii) "Public place" includes:

7 1. a restaurant, shop, shopping center, store, tavern, or other  
8 place of business;

9 2. a public building;

10 3. a public parking lot;

11 4. a public [street,] sidewalk[, or right-of-way];

12 5. a public park or other public grounds;

13 6. the common areas of a building containing four or more  
14 separate dwelling units, including a corridor, elevator, lobby, and stairwell;

15 7. a hotel or motel;

16 8. a place used for public resort or amusement, including an  
17 amusement park, golf course, race track, sports arena, swimming pool, and theater;

18 9. an institution of elementary, secondary, or higher  
19 education;

20 10. a place of public worship;

21 11. a place or building used for entering or exiting a public  
22 conveyance, including an airport terminal, bus station, dock, railway station, subway  
23 station, and wharf; and

24 12. the parking areas, sidewalks, and other grounds and  
25 structures that are part of a public place.

26 (b) For purposes of a prosecution under this section, a public conveyance or a  
27 public place need not be devoted solely to public use.

28 (c) (1) A person may not willfully and without lawful purpose obstruct or  
29 hinder the free passage of another in a public place or on a public conveyance.

1 (2) A person may not willfully act in a disorderly manner that disturbs the  
2 public peace.

3 (3) A person may not willfully fail to obey a reasonable and lawful order  
4 that a law enforcement officer makes to prevent a disturbance to the public peace.

5 (4) A person who enters the land or premises of another, whether an owner  
6 or lessee, or a beach adjacent to residential riparian property, may not willfully:

7 (i) disturb the peace of persons on the land, premises, or beach by  
8 making an unreasonably loud noise; or

9 (ii) act in a disorderly manner.

10 (5) A person from any location may not, by making an unreasonably loud  
11 noise, willfully disturb the peace of another:

12 (i) on the other’s land or premises;

13 (ii) in a public place; [or]

14 (iii) **ON A PUBLIC STREET OR RIGHT-OF-WAY; OR**

15 **(IV)** on a public conveyance.

16 (6) In Worcester County, a person may not build a bonfire or allow a bonfire  
17 to burn on a beach or other property between 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.

18 (d) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction  
19 is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 60 days or a fine not exceeding \$500 or both.

20 **10-206.**

21 **(A) IN THIS SECTION, “HIGHWAY” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 8-101 OF**  
22 **THE TRANSPORTATION ARTICLE.**

23 **(B) A PERSON MAY NOT KNOWINGLY AND WITHOUT LAWFUL PURPOSE**  
24 **OBSTRUCT, HINDER, IMPEDE, OR BLOCK THE USE OF A HIGHWAY.**

25 **(C) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A MISDEMEANOR**  
26 **AND IS SUBJECT TO IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 3 YEARS OR A FINE NOT**  
27 **EXCEEDING \$2,500 OR BOTH.**

28 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
29 October 1, 2021.