

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 750

(Delegate Ziegler, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Judicial Proceedings

Vehicle Laws - Obscured or Modified Registration Plates

This bill prohibits a person from obscuring or modifying a vehicle registration plate *in a manner that may prevent* identification. A police officer may enforce this prohibition only as a secondary action when the police officer detains a driver of a motor vehicle for a suspected violation of another provision of State law. Under the bill, a person *must* be issued a warning for a first offense. For second or subsequent violations committed at least 60 days after issuance of a warning notice, one point is assessed against the license of a person guilty of a violation. Also, a violation is a misdemeanor with a maximum \$500 fine.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Revenues are likely not materially affected. Any changes to enforcement can be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect local finances or operations. Any changes to enforcement can be handled with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: A person may not obscure or modify any vehicle registration plate *with intent to avoid* identification. A violation is a misdemeanor with a maximum \$500 fine. The prepayment penalty is \$280, with one point assessed against the individual's driver's license.

Additional Comments: The Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts) notes that, in fiscal 2023, there were 210 charges issued for obscuring or modifying vehicle plates *with intent to avoid* identification, with 76 guilty dispositions. These figures are similar to fiscal 2022 violations.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: SB 10 (Senator Kagan) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 21, 2024
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