

2024-SB397-T4BL-FAV.pdf

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SB 0397: Vehicle Laws - Military Vehicles - Registration and Operation
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Terps For Bike Lanes – FAVORABLE

February 12th, 2024

Chair Smith and Committee Members,

I am writing this testimony on behalf of Terps For Bike Lanes in support of SB0347. Terps for Bike Lanes is an organization dedicated to enhancing bicycle infrastructure in and around UMD, with a focus on creating a safe and inclusive environment. Terps For Bike Lanes is dedicated to promoting sustainable and alternative transportation methods, including biking.

Our advocacy efforts extend beyond bicycle infrastructure; we are dedicated to supporting initiatives that honor our nation's history and heritage. SB497, by allowing the registration of certain military vehicles as Class MV-C (military vehicle-collectors) vehicles, provides enthusiasts and collectors with the opportunity to preserve and showcase these important pieces of our military history.

Research studies, such as the one conducted by Sullivan and Johnson (2018) published in Military History Quarterly, have highlighted the cultural and historical significance of military vehicles and their importance in preserving our national heritage. This study underscores the importance of recognizing and preserving military vehicles as part of our cultural heritage, promoting understanding and appreciation of our nation's military history.

Terps for Bike Lanes fully supports SB497 and its provisions to establish a registration process for military vehicles, including the establishment of a one-time registration fee and certain standards and procedures for registration. We believe that this legislation will not only honor our nation's military history but also provide enthusiasts and collectors with the opportunity to responsibly own and showcase these important artifacts. We urge a Favorable committee report on this legislation and encourage the Senate to pass it on the floor. Thank you for the opportunity to

testify.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Marks

President, Terps For Bike Lanes

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SB0397 - MVA - Military Vehicle Registration_LOI_F

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

February 13, 2024

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

***RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 397 – Vehicle Laws - Military Vehicles -
Registration and Operation***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following information on Senate Bill 397 for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 397 would establish a new registration class for vehicles meeting certain standards that would allow operation of military vehicles sold to civilians. The bill would allow the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to issue a title and registration plates so long as the vehicles meet set safety standards, and vehicle owners provide relevant documentation along with certain attestations of vehicle use limitations.

Senate Bill 397 requires the MVA to accept either a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) or a unique serial number as assigned by the manufacturer. A military vehicle repurposed for civilian use is unlikely to have a unique VIN, if any, and could have any number of components containing a serial number. Further, the shorter character limit of a serial number could cause an issue with checks run through the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS), resulting in an issue or match with another vehicle in other jurisdictions. Requiring a jurisdictional issued VIN will ensure a vehicle avoids these challenges and matches recommended America Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) best practices for titling such vehicles.

AAMVA guidelines also recommend that military vehicles repurposed for civilian purchase should be barred from operation on all limited-access highways, and that they only be allowed to operate on roads with a maximum speed limit of 35 miles per hour. Senate Bill 397 does provide limits on use, such as banning everyday use and for purposes such as transporting passengers or being used to drive to and from work or school, but does not ban use on other recommended roadways per AAMVA best practices.

Senate Bill 397 requires a military vehicle meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS). As vehicles manufactured for a unique purpose of being used in combat or near armed conflict zones, these vehicles lack many basic requirements otherwise mandated by the FMVSS. For example, a High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) lacks features such as U.S. Safety labels and a model year. As a result, many military vehicles would be prohibited from registration, guaranteeing the safety for all Maryland roadway users.

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Further, the MVA is requesting at a minimum that the vehicle class being created, "MV-C," be altered so as to remove the hyphen. This minor change will result in an outsized reprogramming benefit for the MVA as its system is not currently established to accommodate a four-character vehicle class and would require substantial reprogramming as a result.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberations of Senate Bill 397.

Respectfully submitted,

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