

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 317

(Delegate Petzold, *et al.*)

Commerce and Government Matters

Judicial Proceedings

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Vehicle Laws - Obscuring or Modifying Registration Plate with Intent to Avoid Identification

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This bill prohibits a person from obscuring or modifying any vehicle registration plate to avoid identification and establishes that a violation of this offense will be considered a moving violation for which one point can be assessed against an individual upon conviction.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Potential minimal increase in general fund revenues due to the penalty provision applicable under the Maryland Vehicle Law (maximum \$500 fine). Expenditures would not be affected as the Motor Vehicle Administration could implement the bill with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** At all times, each vehicle registration plate must be maintained free from foreign materials, including registration plate covers, be clearly legible, and securely fastened to the vehicle for which it is issued. A person may not sell or offer for sale any registration plate cover, defined as any tinted, colored, painted, marked, or illuminated object designed to cover any of the characters of a vehicle registration plate. No points are assessed for failure to properly maintain a registration plate. Violators are subject to a \$50 fine established by the District Court.

Persons convicted of a misdemeanor for violating any provision of the Maryland Vehicle Law are subject to a fine of not more than \$500.

**Background:** Chapter 501 of 2001 prohibits clear registration plate covers that distort the image recorded by traffic monitoring systems.

**State Revenues:** General fund revenues could increase to the extent that violations of the offense specified by the bill occur and fines are imposed by the District Court.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Transportation (Motor Vehicle Administration),  
Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 11, 2002  
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