

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 292

(Senator Edwards)

Judicial Proceedings

Environmental Matters

Vehicle Laws - Motor Vehicle and Bicycle Racing Events - Sunset Repeal

This bill repeals the September 30, 2009 termination date of Chapter 211 of 2007. Thus, the bill makes permanent the authorization, under Chapter 211, for a motor vehicle racing event on a highway or highway bridge that is approved by the State Highway Administration (SHA) or a local authority.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not directly affect State finances or operations as discussed below.

Local Effect: None. The bill does not directly affect local finances or operations as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Unless authorized by SHA or a local authority, a person may not drive a vehicle in a race or speed contest on any highway or any private property used by the public. A person also may not participate as a timekeeper or flagman in any unauthorized vehicle race or speed contest.

SHA or a local authority may approve a motor vehicle or bicycle racing event on a highway or highway bridge if the event is held under conditions that provide reasonable

safety for participants, spectators, and other highway users and prevent unreasonable interference with traffic flow. Thus, the highway where the racing event is held must be closed in a manner approved by SHA or the local authority with jurisdiction over the highway, with appropriate access measures in place. If traffic control adequately assures the safety of participants, spectators, and other highway or highway bridge users, SHA or a local authority may exempt participants in an approved motor vehicle racing event from compliance with other provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law that would otherwise apply.

The sponsors of a motor vehicle or bicycle racing event must indemnify the State and local governments from any loss arising out of or relating to the racing event and provide comprehensive liability insurance. The amount of the insurance is to be determined by SHA or the local authority with jurisdiction over the highway where the racing event is to be held, for the benefit of State and local governments, spectators, and other users of the highway or highway bridge. The county or other local jurisdiction where the racing event is to be held must provide written authorization for the racing event.

State/Local Fiscal Effect: The bill maintains current law relating to highway motor vehicle and bicycle racing events and thus does not require the State or any local government to change its operations. Further, the bill merely authorizes highway motor vehicle or bicycle races, and only upon approval by SHA or a local authority. Even if SHA or a local authority approves a racing event, the sponsors of the racing event have to indemnify the State and local governments from any loss arising out of the event.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HB 224 (Allegany County Delegation) - Environmental Matters.

Information Source(s): Cecil, Carroll, Harford, and Montgomery counties; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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