

SENATE BILL 838

R2

4lr2638

By: **Senators Gallion and Folden**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2024

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

Committee Report: Favorable

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 29, 2024

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws – Lighting – Privately Owned Vehicles**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing certain members of a volunteer fire company to equip their
4 privately owned vehicles with red and green or red and white lights or signal devices;
5 and generally relating to vehicle lighting and volunteer fire companies.

6 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
7 Article – Transportation
8 Section 22–218(a), (b), and (c)(1), (2), (4), and (9)
9 Annotated Code of Maryland
10 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
12 Article – Transportation
13 Section 22–218(c)(3)
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

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

18 **Article – Transportation**

19 22–218.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



(a) Every emergency vehicle, in addition to any other equipment and distinctive markings required by this subtitle, shall be equipped with a siren, exhaust whistle, or bell capable of giving an audible signal.

(b) (1) Every emergency vehicle, in addition to any other equipment and distinctive markings required by the Maryland Vehicle Law, shall be equipped with signal lamps mounted as high as practicable, which shall be capable of displaying to the front and to the rear a flashing red light or lights. These lights shall have sufficient intensity to be visible at 500 feet in normal sunlight.

(2) Every school vehicle meeting the requirements established by the Administrator shall be equipped with alternately flashing warning lights in accordance with the standards adopted under § 22–228 of this subtitle.

(c) (1) A person may not drive or move on any highway any vehicle or equipment that is equipped with or displays any light or signal device designed to emit an oscillating, rotating, blinking, or other type of emission of light, unless designated and authorized by the Administrator as indicated in paragraphs (2) through (13) of this subsection. The provisions of this section do not prohibit the display and use of any lighting device that may be permitted or required elsewhere in the Maryland Vehicle Law.

(2) Vehicles of the police department and other city, county, State, or federal law enforcement agencies may be equipped with and display red, white, or blue lights or signal devices.

(3) (i) Vehicles of city, county, State, or federal fire departments or duly constituted volunteer fire departments or rescue squads, or the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System, may be equipped with or display red and/or white lights or signal devices.

(ii) In each volunteer fire company, no more than five of the following officers may have their privately owned vehicles equipped with red **OR RED AND WHITE** lights or signal devices which may be displayed only while on route to or at the scene of an emergency:

1. The fire chief or the highest ranking fireline officer;
2. One or more of the assistant chiefs or deputy chiefs, whichever rank is second in command; and
3. The emergency medical services commander.

(iii) 1. The fire police of each volunteer fire company may have their privately owned vehicles equipped with red, **RED AND GREEN, OR RED AND WHITE** lights or signal devices designed to emit an oscillating, rotating, blinking, or other type of emission of light.

1 2. The lights or signal devices may be flashed or oscillated or
2 otherwise used only while the vehicle is at the scene of an accident, flood, or other
3 emergency to which the volunteer fire company is responding.

4 (4) Ambulances may be equipped with or display red, white, or red and
5 white lights or signal devices.

6 (9) (i) Except as provided in subparagraphs (ii) and (iii) of this
7 paragraph, the blue, red, or white lights or signal devices may be flashed or oscillated or
8 otherwise used only while on route to or at the scene of an emergency, and their use does
9 not relieve an emergency vehicle from otherwise giving an audible warning as required
10 elsewhere in the Maryland Vehicle Law.

11 (ii) The driver of an emergency vehicle may use flashing lights
12 within 100 feet of the entrance ramp of a fire or rescue station while parking or backing the
13 emergency vehicle.

14 (iii) The driver of an emergency vehicle of a fire department or rescue
15 squad shall, at the discretion of the officer in charge, flash or oscillate or otherwise use red
16 and white lights or signal devices while stopped, standing, or parked on the roadway at the
17 scene of an emergency.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
19 October 1, 2024.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.