

# SENATE BILL 635

R6

6lr0673

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By: **Senator Zirkin**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2016

Assigned to: Judicial Proceedings

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Vehicle Laws – Flashing Lights – Community–Based Emergency Response**  
3 **Vehicles**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing vehicles operated by certain community watch groups to  
5 display red and white flashing lights while the groups are on patrol if allowed by a  
6 certain law enforcement agency and if certain requirements are met; making  
7 conforming changes; and generally relating to flashing lights on community watch  
8 group vehicles.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
10 Article – Transportation  
11 Section 22–218(e) and 22–218.2  
12 Annotated Code of Maryland  
13 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2015 Supplement)

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

16 **Article – Transportation**

17 22–218.

18 (e) Except as provided in subsection (c)(3) of this section **AND § 22–218.2 OF**  
19 **THIS SUBTITLE**, the flashing lighting described in subsections (b) and (c) of this section  
20 may not be used on any vehicle other than an emergency vehicle, service vehicle, or school  
21 vehicle.

22 22–218.2.

23 (a) One or more amber flashing lights may be displayed:

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (1) By a tow truck while at the scene of an accident or a disabled vehicle or  
2 while towing a vehicle; and

3 (2) By snow removal and other highway maintenance and service  
4 equipment and escort vehicles.

5 (b) (1) Subject to paragraph ~~[(2)]~~ **(3)** of this subsection, a participant in a  
6 citizens on patrol group or other community watch group may display on a vehicle while on  
7 patrol in the community one or more amber flashing lights.

8 (2) **SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION, A**  
9 **PARTICIPANT IN A CITIZENS ON PATROL GROUP OR OTHER COMMUNITY WATCH**  
10 **GROUP MAY DISPLAY ON A VEHICLE WHILE ON PATROL IN THE COMMUNITY ONE OR**  
11 **MORE RED AND WHITE FLASHING LIGHTS IF THE GROUP:**

12 (I) **HAS BEEN ACTIVE FOR AT LEAST 1 YEAR;**

13 (II) **HAS AT LEAST 25 ACTIVE MEMBERS;**

14 (III) **USES A COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, INCLUDING AN**  
15 **EMERGENCY HOTLINE THAT OPERATES 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK, A**  
16 **DISPATCH SERVICE, AND TWO-WAY RADIO TRANSMISSIONS;**

17 (IV) **RESPONDS TO EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN THE**  
18 **COMMUNITY;**

19 (V) **REQUIRES MEMBERS TO WEAR UNIFORMS WHILE ON DUTY;**  
20 **AND**

21 (VI) **USES VEHICLES WHILE ON PATROL IN THE COMMUNITY.**

22 (3) **[An amber flashing light] THE LIGHTS AUTHORIZED UNDER THIS**  
23 **SUBSECTION:**

24 (i) May only be displayed if allowed by a law enforcement agency  
25 designated by the governing body of the applicable county or municipal corporation; and

26 (ii) Shall be extinguished at the request of a uniformed law  
27 enforcement officer.

28 ~~[(3)]~~ **(4)** The law enforcement agency may require that a sign meeting  
29 specifications set by the agency appear on the vehicle that identifies the group conducting  
30 the patrol while the ~~[amber flashing light is]~~ **LIGHTS AUTHORIZED UNDER THIS**  
31 **SUBSECTION ARE** displayed.

1           (c)   (1)   A security guard agency licensed under Title 19 of the Business  
2 Occupations and Professions Article may equip its vehicles with one or more amber flashing  
3 lights.

4           (2)   A person operating a vehicle equipped with amber flashing lights under  
5 this subsection may activate the lights only while on duty on property that the agency is  
6 responsible for patrolling.

7           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
8 October 1, 2016.