

accident injuries, and curb the escalating costs of health care, workers' compensation, and other insurance-related expenditures associated with motor vehicle accidents; and

WHEREAS, By providing for the primary enforcement of seat belt laws, the General Assembly intends to enhance the safety of motorists on the State's highways, but does not intend to expand in any way the circumstances under which a law enforcement officer may lawfully inspect or search a motor vehicle or the vehicle's contents, driver, or passengers; now, therefore,

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

Article - Transportation

22-412.3.

(a) (1) In this [section,] SECTION the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) (i) "Motor vehicle" means a vehicle that is:

1. Registered or capable of being registered in this State as a Class A (passenger), Class E (truck), Class F (tractor), Class M (multipurpose), or Class P (passenger bus) vehicle; and

2. Required to be equipped with seat belts under federal motor vehicle safety standards contained in the Code of Federal Regulations.

(ii) "Motor vehicle" does not include a Class L (historic) vehicle.

(3) "Outboard front seat" means a front seat position that is adjacent to a door of a motor vehicle.

(4) (i) "Seat belt" means a restraining device described under § 22-412 of this [article] SUBTITLE.

(ii) "Seat belt" includes a combination seat belt-shoulder harness.

(b) A person may not operate a motor vehicle unless the person and each occupant under 16 years old are restrained by a seat belt or a child safety seat as provided in § 22-412.2 of this [article] SUBTITLE.

(c) (1) The provisions of this subsection apply to a person who is at least 16 years old.

(2) Unless a person is restrained by a seat belt, the person may not be a passenger in an outboard front seat of a motor vehicle.

(3) A person who violates the provisions of this subsection shall be subject to the penalties under Title 27 of this article.