

CHAPTER 384

(Senate Bill 276)

AN ACT concerning

Maryland Quiet Vehicles and Pedestrian Safety Task Force

FOR the purpose of establishing a Maryland Quiet Vehicles and Pedestrian Safety Task Force; providing for the membership and duties of the Task Force; providing for the staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation; authorizing a member of the Task Force to receive reimbursement for certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to report to the General Assembly by a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the establishment of a Maryland Quiet Vehicles and Pedestrian Safety Task Force.

Preamble

WHEREAS, It is a high priority of this State that the public streets and highways be safe and navigable by both vehicular and pedestrian traffic; and

WHEREAS, Vehicles designed to provide the desirable benefits of reducing harmful pollutants and operating with greater fuel efficiency, including gasoline-electric hybrid and electric-only vehicles, and in the future, other vehicles that rely on fuels and technologies other than the gasoline internal combustion engine, which operate or are likely to operate virtually soundlessly; and

WHEREAS, The Maryland Clean Cars Act of 2007, which requires that by 2011 a certain percentage of the vehicles sold in this State be vehicles that produce lower emissions, will increase the number of hybrid vehicles and other vehicles using technologies other than the gasoline internal combustion engine on the highways of this State; and

WHEREAS, Because blind pedestrians cannot locate and evaluate traffic using their vision, they must listen to traffic to discern its speed, direction, and other attributes in order to travel safely and independently; and

WHEREAS, Pedestrians, cyclists, runners, and small children who are not blind benefit from the multisensory information available from vehicle traffic, including the sound of vehicle engines; and

WHEREAS, Preliminary research conducted by the National Federation of the Blind, the nation's oldest and largest organization of blind people and the largest organized group of blind people in Maryland, indicates that when operating on electric