

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 345

(Senator Waldstreicher)

Judicial Proceedings

Economic Matters

**Vehicle Manufacturers and Dealers - Dealer and Manufacturer Associations -
Administrative Hearings**

This bill allows a dealer association – on behalf of itself, a dealer, or a group of dealers – or a manufacturer association – on behalf of itself, a manufacturer, or a group of manufacturers – to request a hearing with the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to either (1) resolve a dispute between a dealer, a designated dealer successor, or a dealer association and a manufacturer, manufacturer association, distributor, or factory branch or (2) seek clarification or interpretation of any provision of applicable law. The opportunity to request a hearing does not apply to a dispute involving a manufacturer, distributor, or factory branch that does not have at least one franchised dealer in the State. “Dealer association” means a business entity that (1) is primarily owned by or composed of dealers that collectively represent a majority of the franchised dealers in the State and (2) primarily represents the interests of dealers. “Manufacturer association” means a business entity that (1) is primarily owned by or composed of manufacturers that collectively represent a majority of the manufacturers in the State and (2) primarily represents the interests of manufacturers.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances; any increase in caseload for MVA and the Office of Administrative Hearings can be handled with existing resources.

Local Effect: The bill does not materially affect the operations or finances of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County, which is where any decisions or orders would be appealed.

Small Business Effect: Minimal, as discussed below.

Analysis

Current Law: A dealer, designated dealer successor, as specified, manufacturer, distributor, or factory branch may request a hearing under Title 12, Subtitle 2 of the Transportation Article to (1) resolve a dispute under any provision of Title 15 of the Transportation Article between a dealer or a designated dealer successor and a manufacturer, distributor, or factory branch or (2) seek clarification or interpretation of any provision of applicable law. A hearing held under the Maryland Vehicle Law must be conducted in accordance with the provisions governing contested cases under the Administrative Procedure Act. An aggrieved party to a hearing involving a dispute (as specified above) may appeal a decision or order of MVA to the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County.

Small Business Effect: Dealers or manufacturers that are small businesses may benefit from having a dealer or manufacturer association act as an intermediary in a dispute with a manufacturer, distributor, or factory branch, with the association requesting a hearing with MVA.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 968 and HB 1275 of 2024.

Designated Cross File: HB 1214 (Delegate Amprey) - Economic Matters.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland Department of Transportation; Office of Administrative Hearings; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 11, 2026
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