

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2007 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 847

(Senator Hooper, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

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**Vehicle Laws - Driver's License Renewals - Inmates**

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This bill requires a driver's license held by an inmate of a correctional facility to remain valid during the inmate's term of confinement, regardless of whether it would have otherwise expired. The license is also valid for 30 days after the inmate's release if the inmate has papers in the inmate's immediate possession that indicate the dates of confinement and the license is not otherwise suspended, removed, or cancelled during the 30-day period.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) revenues would decrease due to released inmates renewing their driver's licenses and being charged a lower fee for renewal as opposed to applying for a new license; however, the magnitude of this impact cannot be estimated at this time. Potential increase in TTF expenditures in FY 2008 for computer reprogramming costs.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law/Background:** A driver's license issued to an individual 21 or older is valid for five years and expires on the licensee's date of birth. A driver's license issued to an individual younger than 21 is valid until 60 days after the licensee's twenty-first birthday. An individual can renew a driver's license by paying the renewal fee (lower

than a new driver's license fee) and passing the vision test within six months prior to its expiration, or under specified circumstances. A new noncommercial license costs \$45 whereas each renewal license costs \$30.

A driver's license issued to members of the armed services and/or their dependents absent from the State on active service is valid until the member returns. It is valid for 30 days after the individual's return to Maryland or discharge from the armed services if the licensee possesses papers indicating active service or discharge and the license is not otherwise suspended, revoked, or cancelled during the 30-day period.

Under provisions of the Correctional Services Article, the term "inmate" means an individual who is actually or constructively detained or confined in a correctional facility. In fiscal 2006, the Division of Correction released about 15,500 inmates from incarceration. There were also about 17,700 persons in State pretrial detention. Local correctional facilities, which hold persons both pretrial and post-conviction, had a total of about 132,000 persons released in fiscal 2006.

**State Revenues:** It is not known how many of the individuals who are released from State and local correctional facilities annually would have licenses that would expire while incarcerated or detained. An individual is eligible to renew a driver's license six months before it expires. Some individuals who were only incarcerated for a short period prior to the expiration of their license may have renewed it before incarceration. In addition, some of these individuals may have their licenses revoked for various reasons; others may not be able to renew their license within the 30-day period after release.

For every individual whose license would have otherwise expired while incarcerated and who renewed it in the 30 days after release, TTF revenues could decrease by \$15 per driver's license transactions. Such individuals would be eligible to renew their license (\$30 fee) as opposed to applying for a new license (\$45). *For illustrative purposes only*, if 1,000 individuals were released annually whose license would otherwise have expired while incarcerated, TTF revenues would decrease by \$11,250 in fiscal 2008 and by \$15,000 annually thereafter.

**State Expenditures:** Individuals with valid licenses have the option of renewing a driver's license by mail under specified circumstances, while applying for a driver's license must be done in person. Accordingly, permitting individuals to renew their licenses could reduce the number of in-person transactions at the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). It is assumed that the MVA would redirect any savings in staff time to reducing MVA branch wait times, which are estimated at 44 minutes for fiscal 2008.

The MVA advises that computer reprogramming costs associated with this bill would total \$41,400. Legislative Services advises that, if other legislation is passed requiring computer reprogramming changes, economies of scale could be realized. This would reduce the costs associated with this bill and other legislation affecting the MVA system.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 19, 2007  
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