

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 938

(Delegate Stein)

Environmental Matters

Judicial Proceedings

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Vehicle Laws - Driver's Licenses, Identification Cards, and Moped Operator's  
Permits - Photographs

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This bill repeals the requirement that the photograph on a driver's license, commercial driver's license, provisional driver's license, moped operator's permit, or identification card be in color.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2012.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** A driver's license, commercial driver's license, provisional driver's license, moped operator's permit, or identification card must contain a color photograph of the individual issued the card.

**Background:** Following the transition to a central issuance process, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles began issuing driver's licenses and identification cards with enhanced security features. The cards are made of polycarbonate plastic and are engraved with a laser to produce a black and white photograph that is more tamper-proof

than on previously issued cards. It is unknown how many other state departments of motor vehicles produce similar cards.

Central issuance refers to the process whereby a state department of motor vehicles produces, or contracts to have produced, driver's licenses, identification cards, and other documents in a central location apart from customer service centers. The cards and documents are then mailed to the applicants. This process is considered to be more secure and resistant to fraud. Maryland is in the process of transitioning to a central issuance process, which is expected to be complete in the fall of 2011. However, Maryland has no current plans to issue licenses, permits, or identification cards with black and white photographs.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Transportation, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 25, 2011  
ncs/ljm Revised - House Third Reader - March 29, 2011

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