

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 1194 (Delegate Genn. *et al.*)

Judiciary

Vehicle Laws - Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges - Requirements

This bill requires a police officer who has probable cause to believe that an individual who has a driver's license issued by the U.S. Department of State has committed specified vehicle law violations to contact the U.S. Department of State in order to verify the driver's status and immunity. The police officer must record information from the driver's license or identification card and, within five days after the date of the traffic stop, forward any accident reports, citations, or other charging documents to the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA).

The MVA must file all such information and keep records on all convictions, probation before judgment dispositions of drunk and drugged driving violations, and all traffic accidents. Such records must be forwarded to the U.S. Department of State. If any provision of the bill is held invalid in a court of competent jurisdiction, it will not affect other provisions which can be given effect without the invalid provision.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The MVA and the State Police could handle the requirements of the bill with existing resources.

Local Effect: None. Enforcement could be handled with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Expenditures: The MVA estimates that it will require one additional Administrative Specialist to receive documents, maintain records, and send correspondence to the U.S. Department of State. As such, Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures could increase by an estimated \$28,947 in fiscal 1999, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 1998 effective date. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses. Future year expenditures would be approximately \$35,000 and reflect (1) full salaries with 3.5% annual increases and 3% employee turnover; and (2) 1% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

The Department of Legislative Services advises that the bill's requirements could be handled with existing resources of the MVA. It is reported that 60,000 diplomats and their dependants have driver's licenses issued by the U.S. Department of State. While it is assumed that a significant number of such individuals drive in the State, the number of traffic stops associated with diplomats and their dependants is not expected to reach a level such that a new position needs to be dedicated to the record keeping and notification requirements. As a point of reference there are approximately 3.5 million licensed drivers in the State and there were 1,076,659 traffic citations issued in fiscal 1997.

Information Source(s): Department of Transportation (Motor Vehicle Administration),
Department of State Police

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 16, 1998

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