

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
1999 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Revised

Senate Bill 505 (Senators Van Hollen and Dorman)

Judicial Proceedings

Parking Access for Individuals with Disabilities

The bill specifies that a licensed physician, chiropractor, optometrist, or podiatrist must certify that an individual suffers from one of the list of specified disabilities in order for that individual to obtain a special registration and special plates. Holders of the special plates are not required to pay any parking meter fees if the meters do not meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility guidelines. If it is certified that the holder of the special plate is unable to operate meters meeting the guidelines, the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) must issue that individual a special placard to signify that the driver need not pay the meter fee. The bill establishes application requirements for special registrations, plates, special placards, permanent placards, and temporary placards and requires the MVA to issue identification for those with disability parking privileges.

The MVA must establish an automated system for recording the issuance, renewal, and expiration of placards by July 1, 2001. The bill also requires that each board for licensed physicians, chiropractors, optometrists, or podiatrists must develop and maintain a database system that can interface with the MVA to verify licensure by July 1, 2001. A person who commits fraud or makes any misrepresentation in certifying an individual with a disability is guilty of a misdemeanor under the Motor Vehicle Law.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures will increase by \$43,300 in FY 2000 for reprinting and postage. Future year costs reflect other one-time expenses and temporary personnel costs in FY 2002 and 2003. Estimates are exclusive of potentially significant special fund costs for computer programming. General fund revenues could increase minimally. TTF revenues will not be affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004
SF Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditures	43,300	32,700	86,700	40,800	0
Net Effect	(\$43,300)	(\$32,700)	(\$86,700)	(\$40,800)	\$0

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - =indeterminate effect

Local Effect: Potential minimal increase in revenues.

Small Business Effect: None.

Fiscal Analysis

State Revenues: Some State-owned facilities such as universities operate parking meters. To the extent that such parking meters are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines, meter revenues could increase. The bill specifies that only those individuals that are certified as unable to operate the meters will be exempt from the meter fee. Current law exempts all those with disability registration plates or permits from paying the meter fee. Additionally, an increase in revenue could result as more drivers are cited for parking infractions.

Additionally, general fund revenue could increase minimally from the penalty associated with committing fraud or making any misrepresentation in certifying an individual with a disability. Under the Maryland Vehicle Law, the maximum fine is \$500.

While under current law the MVA is authorized to charge a fee to issue a special disability permit or placard, it provides this service free of charge. Accordingly, TTF revenues would not be affected.

State Expenditures: The bill alters the manner in which the MVA will issue and renew disability plates and placards. Currently, there is no electronic tracking system for placard recipients nor is there a system in place for verifying disabilities. A letter signed by a physician is acceptable under MVA's current procedures to issue the special plate or placard. To notify medical professionals of the new requirements, the MVA will reprint and mail brochures and explanatory letters at an estimated cost of \$7,300. Additional brochures will be available at all MVA branch locations at a cost of \$3,800. Further, MVA will reprint its certification/application form citing the new requirements for approximately \$7,800. These forms will be mailed to every licensee through the normal registration renewal process. The above costs, totaling \$18,900, represent one-time costs only in fiscal 2000.

The MVA expects that initial compliance with the stricter certification requirements will be low by those seeking to obtain a disability registration plate or placard. MVA advises that

because its computerized tracking system will not be immediately operational, it will renew registration and placards one time without the medical professional certification and will follow up with a warning letter and a request for the proper certification. Postage and other costs associated with this process are expected to be approximately \$65,300 over the next two years beginning with the bill's effective date.

The MVA further expects that it will require almost two years to develop the automated system required by the bill. While the cost of such a system is unknown, it is assumed to be significant. Once the system is operational, approximately 210,000 new and renewed applications for plates and placards will be entered into the database. Accordingly, beginning in fiscal 2002, the MVA will hire three contractual clerks to process the applications and to enter data into the new system. These employees will increase special fund expenditures by an estimated \$54,500 in fiscal 2002.

The contractual employees will only be employed for a two-year registration cycle. The system should be largely automated in future years and can be managed with existing personnel.

The bill further requires the MVA to issue identification to plate and placard holders as proof that the parking privileges are being utilized by a person with a disability. The MVA anticipates printing a start-up supply of 400,000 identification cards at a cost of \$.06 each, totaling \$24,000. The issuance of such cards will coincide with the completion of the tracking system in fiscal 2002.

In addition, the bill requires the State boards for licensed physicians, chiropractors, optometrists, and podiatrists to develop and maintain a database system that can interface with the MVA to verify licensure of the medical professionals by July 1, 2001. Cost estimates for this system range between \$20,000 and \$100,000.

Local Revenues: To the extent that counties operate parking meters that are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines, meter revenues and revenues from fines could increase.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation (Motor Vehicle Administration); Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Montgomery, Prince George's, Wicomico, Allegany, and Talbot Counties; Department of Legislative Services

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