

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 112	(Chairman, Judicial Proceedings Committee, <i>et al.</i> (Departmental – Transportation)
Judicial Proceedings	Commerce and Government Matters

Vehicle Laws - Registration Plates and Parking Placards - Individuals with Disabilities

This departmental bill requires that a person applying for disability registration plates or a parking placard due to losing the use of a foot, leg, hand, or arm provide medical certification to the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). It repeals the person's authority to self-certify the loss of use of a limb or appendage.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures would increase by approximately \$12,600 in FY 2003 only due to administrative costs associated with altering registration requirements.

Local Effect: Although there would be a potential increase in parking revenue for jurisdictions that allow free parking for individuals with disabilities, any such increase is not expected to be significant.

Small Business Effect: The Department of Transportation has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law: Under Section 13-616 of the Transportation Article, persons are eligible to receive a special registration plate that allows them to park in spaces designated for drivers with disabilities if they:

- have lung disease to a specified extent;
- have cardiovascular limits classified in severity as Class III or IV;
- are unable to walk 200 feet without stopping to rest;
- are unable to walk without the use of a brace, cane, crutch, or other assistive device;
- require a wheelchair for mobility;
- have lost or lost use of a foot, leg, arm, or hand;
- have a permanent impairment of both eyes to a specified extent; or
- have a permanent disability which is so severe that they would endure a hardship or be subject to a risk of injury if they were denied a special registration plate.

Persons who have lost a foot, leg, arm, or hand or the use thereof can self-certify their condition to receive a plate or placard. The remaining conditions require medical certification. The registration plate applies only to the following vehicles: Class A (passenger), D (motorcycle), M (multipurpose), E (truck), and H, I, or J (equipped for individuals with disabilities).

Background: The MVA advises that determining whether someone has lost the use of a limb often requires sensory or other medical tests and that MVA employees are not qualified or trained to perform such tests. The legislation seeks to eliminate the potential for fraud and abuse in which individuals fake the loss of use of a limb to receive a parking placard, which can reduce the number of available parking spaces for individuals with true disabilities.

The Governor's Task Force on Accessible Parking -- co-chaired by the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Governor's Office for Individuals with Disabilities -- recommended this proposal to the department.

State Expenditures: TTF expenditures would increase by \$12,649 in fiscal 2003 because the bill would necessitate the reprinting of applications for disability plates (\$6,903) and disability pamphlets to inform applicants of the changes in the law (\$5,746).

The MVA estimates that the bill would cost \$22,649 in fiscal 2003 because of the need for \$10,000 for computer programming costs. However, the Department of Legislative Services advises that if other legislation that requires programming changes is passed, economies of scale could be realized and reduce the programming costs associated with this bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Transportation (Motor Vehicle Administration),
Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History:
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