

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 93

(Chair, Environmental Matters Committee)(By Request -
Departmental - Transportation)

Environmental Matters

Judicial Proceedings

Motor Vehicle Administration - Identification Cards and Drivers' Licenses

This departmental bill allows the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to increase the validity period of an identification (ID) card for persons age 65 or older to no more than eight years, as established by regulation. The bill also authorizes the waiver of a vision examination for an applicant who is applying for a corrected driver's license and has passed an acceptable vision exam within the last year. The bill also removes the question regarding employer information from the application for a driver's license.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The computer reprogramming required to implement the bill can be handled with existing budgeted resources at MVA.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: The Maryland 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: An ID card issued to an applicant younger than age 16 expires five years from issuance. An ID card issued to an applicant who is age 16 or older may expire after a period of no more than five years as determined in MVA regulations; currently, regulations set this period at five years.

MVA may only waive an applicant from administration of a vision examination if the applicant holds a valid driver's license, is applying for a multipurpose vehicle license and has completed the approved motorcycle safety course, or holds a valid license from another state or a province or territory of Canada.

Background: MVA advises that extending the validity period of ID cards for customers who are age 65 or older will lessen the burden on the estimated 91,000 senior citizens who currently hold ID cards and improve MVA branch wait times for everyone. While extending the validity of a *driver's license* for senior citizens is a controversial issue because of the reduction in vision tests among senior citizens that would result, identification cards do not authorize the holder to drive and, thus, do not require a vision test. MVA further advises that a validity period of eight years for ID cards is compliant with federal REAL-ID requirements. ID cards are free for senior citizens.

Currently, if a driver's license is mutilated or severely damaged and rendered unusable, the holder is required to retake the vision examination to apply for a corrected license, even if he or she had taken the exam and received the license only a day before. The bill's waiver of a vision examination for applicants of a corrected license who have taken the vision exam within the past year is consistent with the current MVA policy regarding the one-year validity period for a doctor's eye examination.

MVA advises that it does not use the employer information provided on the driver's license application form for any purpose. Therefore, MVA considers the information superfluous and believes it can be removed.

State Fiscal Effect: The bill results in operational efficiencies at MVA branch offices as a result of about 6,825 fewer visits from applicants who are age 65 or older seeking an ID card renewal and about 28,000 fewer visits from applicants seeking a corrected license within a year of license issuance. The bill helps MVA continue to achieve its goal of maintaining customer visit times at or below 40 minutes. MVA met this goal in fiscal 2009 with 8.7 million customer visits averaging 40 minutes.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 29, 2010
a/ljm

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Motor Vehicle Administration – Identification Cards and Driver’s Licenses

BILL NUMBER: HB 93

PREPARED BY: Maryland Department of Transportation

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

☒ WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

☐ WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

The proposed legislation will have no impact on small business in Maryland.