

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 741

(Senator Forehand, *et al.*)

Judicial Proceedings

Environmental Matters

**Vehicle Laws - U.S. Foreign Service Members Absent from State - Effective
Period of Driver's License**

This bill establishes that the driver's license of a member of the Foreign Service of the United States, or the member's spouse or dependent, remains in full force and effect during the individual's absence from the State due to the member's employment in the Foreign Service. An expired driver's license of a member, or a member's spouse or dependent, also remains in full force and effect for 30 days following the individual's return to the State if the individual has, within immediate possession, the individual's driver's license, documentation showing the member's service outside of the State, and if the license was not otherwise suspended, revoked, or canceled.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) revenues decrease negligibly beginning in FY 2013 due to the payment of fewer driver's license issuance and renewal fees. Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) workloads increase minimally to establish a new process to handle the issuance and renewal driver's licenses for members of the Foreign Service and their spouses and dependents, including the authentication of eligibility documents. However, expenditures are not materially affected.

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: A driver's license of a member of the armed forces of the United States, or the member's dependent, remains in full force and effect during the member's absence from the State on active service. If the driver's license of a member of the armed forces of the United States or member's dependent expires while the member is out of the State on active service, the driver's license may remain in full force and effect until 30 days after the individual returns to the State. The 30-day extension is valid as long as the individual has, within immediate possession, the driver's license and papers showing the member's service outside the State. In addition, the driver's license must not otherwise be suspended, revoked, or canceled. Although members of the armed forces of the United States and dependents of the members of the armed forces of the United States receive an automatic extension of their driver's licenses, members of the Foreign Service of the United States do not receive the same license renewal extension.

The mission of members of the Foreign Service of the United States is to promote peace, support prosperity, and protect American citizens while advancing the interests of the United States abroad. Members of the Foreign Service are employed by the U.S. Department of State and serve in over 265 locations worldwide. Members are assigned to various overseas locations, including posts that are located in isolated or unhealthful environments. Members' initial tours typically last about two years.

Currently, MVA allows individuals to renew their driver's licenses or identification cards while overseas through submission of a specific form to the Absent from State Unit of MVA.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 27, 2012
ncs/ljm

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