

The Florida Senate
PROFESSIONAL STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: Transportation Committee

BILL: SB 2042

INTRODUCER: Senator Baker

SUBJECT: Specialty License Plates

DATE: March 19, 2007

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Boyd	Meyer	TR	Pre-meeting
2.			TA	
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

This bill authorizes the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to develop and issue a “Support Our Troops” specialty license plate. The license plate annual use fees shall be distributed to Support Our Troops, Inc., to be used for the benefit of Florida troops and their families in accordance with its articles of incorporation.

This bill substantially amends ss. 320.08056 and 320.08058 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Currently, specialty license plates are available to any owner or lessee of a motor vehicle who is willing to pay an annual use fee for the privilege. Annual use fees ranging from \$15 to \$25, paid in addition to required license taxes and service fees, are distributed to an organization or organizations in support of a particular cause or charity signified in the plate’s design and designated in statute. The Legislature may create a specialty license plate under its own initiative, or it can do so at the request of an organization. Under s. 320.08053, F.S., an organization may seek Legislative authorization for a new specialty license plate by meeting a number of requirements. An organization is first required to submit to the DHSMV the following:

- A request for the plate describing it in general terms.
- The results of a professional, independent, and scientific sample survey of Florida residents indicating 30,000 vehicle owners intend to purchase the plate at the increased cost.

- An application fee of \$60,000 defraying the DHSMV's cost for reviewing the application, developing the new plate, and providing for the manufacture and distribution of the first run of plates.
- A marketing strategy for the plate and a financial analysis of anticipated revenues and planned expenditures.

These requirements must be satisfied at least 90 days prior to the convening of the regular session of the Legislature. Once the requirements are met, DHSMV notifies the committees of the House of Representatives and Senate with jurisdiction over the issue, and the organization is free to find sponsors and pursue Legislative action.

Support Our Troops, Inc. has met all of the application and statutory requirements to pursue legislation for the specialty license plates. In addition, the Auditor General has reported in Report No. 2007-109, that this organization has met the survey requirements as required in the Florida Statutes.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Support Our Troops

Support Our Troops, Inc. will use the annual use fees for the benefit of Florida troops and their families in accordance with its articles of incorporation. Support Our Troops, Inc., may retain all revenue from the annual use fees until all startup costs for developing and establishing the plate have been recovered. Thereafter, up to 25% of the annual use fee revenue may be used for administrative costs, promotion, and marketing of the "Support Our Troops" specialty license plates.

The bill provides the Support Our Troops license plate may also be issued in a size designed for motorcycles.

The bill provides that Support Our Troops license plate is exempt from s. 320.08056 (8) (a), F.S., which requires certain license plate sales requirements in order to continue the sale of the license plate. Currently, only collegiate license plates are exempt.

The bill also provides the specific font to be used for the lettering of the "Support Our Troops" license plate. This contradicts s. 320.08053(3), F.S., which requires DHSMV to provide uniform lettering specifications. Since implementation of this statute, other organizations have followed these uniform lettering guidelines.

In addition, the bill provides that Support Our Troops, Inc. may alternate the phrase at the bottom of the plate to "Support Our Heroes" or "Salute Our Heroes." This would require the design of two separate license plate designs and would effectively double the design and manufacturing costs of the license plate.

The current bill provides at the owner's request, on an application form for the license plate, the owner's personal information may be released to the sponsoring organization. Current specialty license plate procedures do not require purchasers to fill out an application form. This provision may require an extra step on the part of the prospective purchaser. Currently, s. 119.0712, F.S.,

does not allow for the release of personal information to specific groups that do not meet Federal Drivers Privacy Protection Act requirements as specified in Chapter 119, F.S., and the Department's Florida Real Time Vehicle Information System (FRVIS) Computer System prevents the dissemination of all registrant's personal information.

The bill provides the "Support Our Troops" license plate must begin production and distribution of the Support Our Troops specialty license plate within 90 days after its approval by the Legislature. Due to the time required for the ordering and manufacturing of plate sheeting, and the time required for design approval by the Cabinet, 90 days may not be sufficient time for distribution to begin. Section 320.08056(1), F.S., currently allows DHSMV one year to implement a new legislatively authorized specialty license plate.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Implementation of SB 2042 will cost the DHSMV approximately \$60,000 in contract programming, development labor, and product purchasing costs for the creation of the "Support Our Troops" specialty license plate. This fiscal impact is offset by the statutory application fee of \$60,000, which has been submitted to the DHSMV by the sponsoring organization seeking creation of this specialty license plate.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

This Senate Professional Staff Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

VIII. Summary of Amendments:

None.

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