



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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March 2, 2000

TO: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 141: Vehicle Color and Motor Vehicle Registration

Assembly Bill 141 was introduced on February 25, 1999, and referred to the Assembly Committee on Transportation. On April 22, 1999, that Committee recommended passage of Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to AB 141 on a vote of 14 to 1. The bill was referred to the Joint Committee on Finance on May 6, 1999.

SUMMARY OF SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT

Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 to AB 141 would require the Department of Transportation to include a vehicle's color on a certificate of registration for vehicles, other than motorcycles, that are registered at a gross weight of 8,000 pounds or less. The substitute amendment would require DOT to include a place to indicate the color of a vehicle being registered on the application for an original registration for these vehicles. The substitute amendment would also require DOT to include on the application for an original registration a place for indicating whether the color of a vehicle is different from the color specified on the existing certificate of registration and, if so, the new color.

Under current law, DOT must include on registration renewal applications the same information that must be included on an application for an original registration, or parts of this information that the Department deems necessary to assure proper registration of the vehicle. Therefore, under the substitute amendment, DOT would have to include places for indicating the color-related information on registration renewal applications only if the Department deems it necessary for proper registration.

The substitute amendment would specify that no person has to notify DOT before the next renewal of registration for a vehicle that a color has been changed from the color stated in the most recent application for registration of the vehicle.

The substitute amendment would prohibit a law enforcement officer from stopping a vehicle solely because the vehicle's color differs from the color stated in the application for registration of that vehicle. This prohibition would not limit the authority of a law enforcement officer to issue a citation for improper registration of a vehicle whose color differs from the color stated in the application for registration of the vehicle, if the difference is observed in the course of a stop or inspection made for other purposes.

These changes would first apply to applications for registration of vehicles that are submitted to DOT on the first day of the fourth month beginning after publication of the act, or on July 1, 2000, whichever is later.

FISCAL EFFECT

In its fiscal note for the bill, DOT indicates that its vehicle registration data processing and printing systems would need to be modified to accommodate vehicle color, at a one-time cost of \$37,500. DOT indicates that the substitute amendment would have the same fiscal effect as the original bill.

In preparing this estimate, DOT assumed that the new color requirement would apply to all newly registered vehicles, but that vehicles that are already registered at the time of the effective date would not be subject to the requirement, even upon registration renewal. These vehicles would only be issued a certificate of registration specifying the color of the vehicle if and when they are first registered by a new owner. Eventually, under this implementation plan, almost all registered vehicles would have a certificate of registration indicating the color of the vehicle, but this would take many years. The Department indicates that issuing certificates of registration upon renewal for all vehicles that are already registered at the time of the effective date of the bill would increase the fiscal impact of the bill by \$690,000. Most of the additional expense is associated with higher costs for postage and mailing since the Department would be required to send a form in an envelope to all vehicle owners with their registration renewal notice, whereas currently only a postcard is sent.

The substitute amendment would not provide additional funds for the Division of Motor Vehicles for the one-time costs identified in the fiscal estimate, so these costs would have to be absorbed within the Division's budget (\$67,937,400 in 2000-01).

Prepared by: Jon Dyck