2021 ASSEMBLY BILL 432

July 1, 2021 - Introduced by Representatives ZIMMERMAN, DITTRICH, EDMING, JAMES, KURTZ, PLUMER, J. RODRIGUEZ, SPIROS, STEFFEN, TUSLER, SCHRAA, ARMSTRONG, VANDERMEER and MURPHY, cosponsored by Senators WANGGAARD, L. TAYLOR, FELZKOWSKI, JAGLER, KOOYENGA, MARKLEIN and NASS. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

AN ACT to renumber and amend 341.135; to amend 341.12 (4) (a), 341.16 (1) (a) and 341.16 (2); and to create 341.12 (4) (am), 341.135 (2), 341.135 (3) and 341.16 (2s) of the statutes; relating to: construction and issuance of motor vehicle registration plates.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Department of Transportation to replace motor vehicle registration plates on a rolling seven-year basis beginning in 2022 and establishes requirements for the construction of plates.

Under current law, DOT must establish new designs for plates at intervals determined by DOT. Subsequently, DOT must issue plates with the new design at a time determined by DOT. Plates may also be replaced upon application of a vehicle owner in the case of lost, destroyed, or illegible plates.

Under the bill, beginning with registrations effective February 1, 2022, if the registration for a vehicle is renewed and plates for that vehicle have not been issued during the previous seven years, DOT must issue two new registration plates for the vehicle. The bill requires DOT to assess a $6.50 fee for the replacement plates and $3.25 for a plate that is lost, destroyed, or illegible.

Under current law, standard plates issued on an annual or biennial basis and plates issued for motor trucks with a gross weight of not more than 8,000 pounds must be treated with a reflectorized material or substance. DOT must, in conjunction with the Department of Corrections and the Department of
Administration, establish the specifications for the reflectorized material and award a contract for supplying the material through a competitive bidding process.

The bill retains this requirement and provides that all new plates issued by DOT be constructed with aluminum plates and prismatic sheeting with embedded security features. The plate sheeting must be a type successfully used by the manufacturer in multiple jurisdictions and must also meet specified reflectivity and luminance values.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 341.12 (4) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

341.12 (4) (a) All subject to par. (am), all registration plates issued under s. 341.25 (1) (a) and for motor trucks having a gross weight of not more than 8,000 pounds shall be treated with a reflectorized material or substance. The department shall prescribe the term for the use of reflectorized plates.

SECTION 2. 341.12 (4) (am) of the statutes is created to read:

341.12 (4) (am) Beginning with registrations initially effective February 1, 2022, all registration plates issued by the department shall be constructed with aluminum plates tempered to a hardness and thickness of approximately 0.027 inches and prismatic sheeting with embedded security features. Registration plate sheeting shall be of a type successfully used by the manufacturer in multiple jurisdictions and shall have an initial minimum coefficient of reflectivity of 150 candelas per lux per square meter and an initial minimum luminance factor greater than 55.

SECTION 3. 341.135 of the statutes is renumbered 341.135 (1) and amended to read:
341.135 (1) **Design.** At intervals determined by the department, the department shall establish new designs of registration plates to be issued under ss. 341.14 (1), (1a), (1m), (1q), (2), (2m), (6m), and (6r), 341.25 (1) (a), (c), (h), and (j) and (2) (a), (b), and (c), and 341.26 (2) and (3) (a) 1. and (am). Any design for registration plates issued for automobiles and for vehicles registered on the basis of gross weight shall comply with the applicable design requirements of ss. 341.12 (3), 341.13, and 341.14 (6r) (c). The designs for registration plates specified in this section subsection shall be as similar in appearance as practicable during each design interval. Except as provided in ss. 341.13 (2r) and 341.14 (1), each registration plate issued under s. 341.14 (1), (1a), (1m), (1q), (2), (2m), (6m), or (6r), 341.25 (1) (a), (c), (h), or (j) or (2) (a), (b), or (c), or 341.26 (2) or (3) (a) 1. or (am) during each design interval shall be of the design established under this section subsection. The department may not redesign registration plates for the special groups under s. 341.14 (6r) (f) 19m., 33m., and 48m. until July 1, 2010. Notwithstanding s. 341.13 (3), as the department establishes new designs for registration plates under this section, the department shall, at the time determined appropriate by the department, issue registration plates of the new design to replace registration plates previously issued. This section does not apply to special group plates under s. 341.14 (6r) (f) 19m., 33m., and 48m.

**Section 4.** 341.135 (2) of the statutes is created to read:

341.135 (2) **Issuance.** Notwithstanding s. 341.13 (3), beginning with registrations initially effective February 1, 2022, upon receipt of a completed application to renew the registration of a vehicle under ss. 341.14 (1), (1a), (1m), (1q), (2), (2m), (6m), or (6r), 341.25 (1) (a), (c), (h), or (j) or (2) (a), (b), or (c), or 341.26 (2) or (3) (a) 1. or (am) for which a registration plate has not been issued during the
previous 7 years, the department shall issue and deliver prepaid to the applicant 2
new registration plates of the design established under sub. (1).

**SECTION 5.** 341.135 (3) of the statutes is created to read:

341.135 (3) **APPLICABILITY.** This section does not apply to special group plates
under s. 341.14 (6r) (f) 19m., 33m., or 48m.

**SECTION 6.** 341.16 (1) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

341.16 (1) (a) Whenever a current registration plate is lost or destroyed, the
owner of the vehicle to which the plate was attached shall immediately apply to the
department for replacement. Except as provided in par. (b) and sub. (2m), upon
satisfactory proof of the loss or destruction of the plate and upon payment of a fee of
$2 $3.25 for each plate, the department shall issue a replacement.

**SECTION 7.** 341.16 (2) of the statutes is amended to read:

341.16 (2) Whenever a current registration plate becomes illegible, the owner
of the vehicle to which the plate is attached shall apply to the department for a
replacement. Except as provided in sub. (2m), upon receipt of satisfactory proof of
illegibility, and upon payment of a fee of $2 $3.25 for each plate, the department shall
issue a replacement. Upon receipt of a replacement plate, the applicant shall destroy
the illegible plate.

**SECTION 8.** 341.16 (2s) of the statutes is created to read:

341.16 (2s) When the owner of a vehicle applies to the department to renew the
registration of a vehicle for which new plates are required under s. 341.135 (2), and
upon payment of a fee of $6.50, the department shall issue new replacement plates.
Upon receipt of replacement plates, the applicant shall destroy the replaced plates.

**SECTION 9. Effective date.**
(1) This act takes effect on February 1, 2022.