



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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TO: Members  
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Assembly Bill 431: Special License Plate for Emergency Responders

Assembly Bill 431 was introduced on May 19, 2005, and referred to the Committee on Transportation. On November 17, 2005, that Committee adopted Assembly Amendment 1 on a vote of 13 to 0 and recommended the bill for passage, as amended, on a vote of 13 to 0. On January 9, 2006, the bill was referred to the Joint Committee on Finance.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Department of Transportation issues special license plates for members of certain statutorily-authorized groups. In nearly all cases, applicants for a special plate pay a \$15 plate issuance fee when the plate is first received and when a replacement plate is issued. Revenues from issuance fees are deposited in the transportation fund for all plates, except for the fees for veterans group plates, which are deposited in the veterans trust fund. The issuance fee revenues that are deposited in the transportation fund are not automatically appropriated for the Division of Motor Vehicles. For some plate types, such as the endangered resources, Green Bay Packers, and celebrate children plates, applicants also pay an annual fee (typically \$20 or \$25) to generate revenue for specific programs related to the plate.

The Department also issues special group license plates to groups that are not designated by statute but, instead, upon successful application by a group. The applying group must pay the Department \$15,000, although an amount is refunded to the group, up to \$12,000, equal to the number of the special group plates that are issued times \$15. The statutes specify that no special group plates may be authorized after October 1, 1998, except through this application procedure, although several statutory exceptions to this restriction have been made since that time.

Assembly Bill 431 relates to the creation of a special license plate for first responders and emergency medical technicians, as those terms are defined under current law. Under current law a first responder is defined as a person who, as a condition of employment or as a member of an organization that provides emergency medical care before hospitalization, provides emergency medical care to a sick, disabled, or injured individual before the arrival of an ambulance, but who does not provide transportation for a patient. An emergency medical technician is categorized as one of three types, defined as follows: (a) an "emergency medical technician - basic" is defined as an individual who is licensed by the DHFS to administer basic life support and to properly handle and transport sick, disabled, or injured individuals; (b) an "emergency medical technician-intermediate" is defined as an individual who is licensed by DHFS as an emergency medical technician - intermediate under that Department's rules; and (c) an "emergency medical technician-paramedic" is defined as an individual who is specially trained in emergency cardiac, trauma, and other lifesaving or emergency procedures in a training program or course of instruction prescribed by DHFS and who is examined and licensed as an emergency medical technician - paramedic under that Department's rules.

## **SUMMARY OF BILL**

Assembly Bill 431 would establish a special license plate for emergency responders, which would be defined to include first responders and emergency medical technicians, as those terms are defined under current law. The bill would specify that if a person who holds an emergency responder plate does not maintain the status as an emergency responder during a year that is not a plate issuance year, the person would be required to dispose of the plate in a manner prescribed by the Department. The bill also would specify that the current law provision that prohibits the creation of new special group plates after October 1, 1998, except through the group application process, does not apply to the emergency responder plate.

## **SUMMARY OF ASSEMBLY AMENDMENT 1**

Assembly Amendment 1 to AB 431 would provide \$11,800 SEG in the Division of Motor Vehicles' appropriation in the year that the bill becomes effective for the purpose of the emergency responder plate. These funds would be provided on a one-time basis.

## **FISCAL EFFECT**

In its fiscal estimate for AB 431, the Department of Transportation notes that since there is already a special license plate for emergency medical technicians, the demand for the new plate would likely only come from first responders. The Department estimates that 100 plates would be sold during the first year of issuance and that approximately 10 plates would be issued per year thereafter. The cost to manufacture and issue these plates is estimated at \$1,600 in the first year and

\$160 per year thereafter (\$16 per plate set). The cost of data processing to create the new plate is estimated at \$10,200, increasing the total, first-year implementation costs to \$11,800. Assembly Amendment 1 would provide \$11,800 SEG in the Division of Motor Vehicles' appropriation for these costs.

If 100 plates are issued in the first year, the issuance fees would generate \$1,500 in that year. Consequently, the fiscal effect of the bill, as amended, would be a net decrease of \$10,300 in the balance of the transportation fund.

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