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S.B. 52
136th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Click here for S.B. 52's Bill Analysis

Version: As Reported by House Transportation

Primary Sponsor: Sen. Schaffer

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

Specialty license plates

- The Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) will incur costs of at least $6.35 to produce each specialty license plate issued, of which the bill creates 19. That cost will generally be offset by the collection of the $10 BMV administrative fee that is charged under existing law when a specialty license plate is issued or renewed.
- The Public Safety – Highway Purposes Fund (Fund 5TM0), used by the Department of Public Safety, and certain local governments may experience a minimal decrease in revenue from the bill's waiver of registration taxes and fees for each "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate issued, which is also created by the bill.

Highway designations

- The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) will incur costs of approximately $1,400 to produce and install each set of signs for 25 of the 36 designated highways or bridges in the bill. In total, 11 municipalities may incur some costs for installing the signs. Signs usually need to be replaced every 12 to 15 years.

Detailed Analysis

Specialty license plates

The bill creates a total of 19 specialty license plates, 18 of which are available to all Ohio motorists, and requires a person to pay an additional amount that ranges from $20 to $40, depending on the license plate, when the plate is issued and renewed. A portion of that fee is retained by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), with the remainder distributed to a designated recipient. The following table shows each of those 18 license plates and the distribution of the

additional amount. The bill also creates the "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate that is available to Ohio motorists who have been awarded the Law Enforcement Purple Heart. That license plate is discussed separately under the heading below entitled "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate.

Specialty License Plates

License Plate	BMV Fee	Required Contribution	Contribution Recipient	Statutory Use of Contribution
1905 Wright Flyer III	$10	$25	Ohio War Orphans and Severely Disabled Veterans' Children Scholarship Donation Fund	Operating the war orphans and severely disabled veterans' children scholarship program and to provide grants
American Motorcyclist Association	$10	$15	American Motorcyclist Association	Promoting the motorcycle lifestyle and protecting the future of motorcycling
Ancient Order of Hibernians	$10	$10	AOH Ohio State Board	Purposes of historical preservation and promotion of Irish culture in accordance with its mission
Beaver Creek Wetlands	$10	$25	Beaver Creek Wetlands Association	Preserving and restoring areas in the Beaver Creek wetland and watershed habitat through conservation, stewardship, and education
Blue Knights L.E.M.C.	$10	$10	Blue Knights International Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club	Furthering the mission of the organization
Chillicothe Paints	$10	$10	Paints Sports and Entertainment, LLC	Supporting nonprofit organizations and schools in southern Ohio
COSI	$10	$25	Franklin County Historical Society	Supporting the Center of Science and Industry (COSI) programs, which inspire interest in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics
Dayton Dragons	$10	$25	Dayton Dragons	Dayton Dragons Foundation Program
DoItForJack	$10	$20	Jack Quehl Foundation	Supporting the activities of the foundation

License Plate	BMV Fee	Required Contribution	Contribution Recipient	Statutory Use of Contribution
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	$10	An amount determined by the applicant	King Arts Complex	Furthering the mission of the organization
Ironton Fighting Tigers	$10	$30	Ironton City School District	Providing one-time scholarships to the graduating seniors from Ironton High School with the highest and second highest grade point averages (35% each); and to the Ironton City Schools Athletic Department for nonsalary purposes (30%)
Land of U.S. Grant	$10	$20	Land of U.S. Grant	Furthering the mission of the organization
Lifetown	$10	$15	Lifetown, Inc.	Funding its programs and activities
Paul Laurence Dunbar High School	$10	$20	Paul Laurence Dunbar High School	Providing college preparation courses and tutoring services
Pediatric Cancer Awareness	$10	$10	Littlest Heroes, Inc.	Providing financial support for families battling pediatric cancer and other childhood illness
Play Golf Ohio	$10	$25	Split evenly between the Northern Ohio PGA Section Foundation and Southern Ohio PGA Golf Foundation	Promoting golf throughout Ohio
Save22	$10	$22	Save22	Suicide prevention and mental health services
Toledo Mud Hens	$10	$10	Toledo Mud Hens	Helping Hens Program

*The bill prohibits the Registrar of Motor Vehicles from rejecting an application for the license plate if the applicant does not provide a contribution.

Specialty license plates are produced by the BMV via a digital print-on-demand process at a cost of $6.35 for a single license plate, or $7.70 for a pair.[1] These costs will be offset by the collection of the $10 BMV administrative fee which is paid at the initial issuance of the license plate and for each subsequent renewal and credited to the Public Safety – Highway Purposes Fund (Fund 5TM0), which is used in part to pay the BMV's expenses related to titling motor vehicles, licensing drivers, and registering motor vehicles.

Each of these 18 specialty license plates are subject to existing law's implementation procedure, meaning that the Registrar of Motor Vehicles does not have to issue the license plate until written statements from at least 150 people indicating their intent to apply for and obtain the license plate have been received.[2]

Assuming the minimum number of applicants meets the threshold of 150 for the first year that each specialty license plate is available, the BMV will incur production costs of at least $952.50 (150 persons x $6.35), which will be offset by the collection of at least $1,500 (150 persons x $10) in BMV fees. The amount generated by each specialty license plate for each designated recipient will range from at least $1,500 (150 persons x $10) to at least $4,500 (150 persons x $30), depending on the license plate. In subsequent years, those amounts will vary and depend on the number of each type of plate that is issued or renewed.

"Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate

The bill also creates the "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate, which is available to Ohio motorists who have been awarded the Law Enforcement Purple Heart by the National Association of Chiefs of Police, generally without payment of any registration or service fee, or motor vehicle license tax.[3] When applicable, the bill also requires that the "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate display the international symbol of access.

By waiving the registration fees and license taxes associated with the "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate, the bill may minimally reduce the amount of BMV registration fee revenue generated and credited to Fund 5TM0, and the amount of local tax distributions received by certain local governments.

The bill also provides Law Enforcement Purple Heart recipients who wish to obtain a personalized license plate the option to do so upon payment of 75% of the additional fees that apply to such license plates.[4] To the extent that personalized "Law Enforcement Purple Heart"

[1] Under current law, a person registering a motor vehicle may elect to purchase a single license plate or a set of two plates.

[2] R.C. 4503.78.

[3] Annual passenger vehicle registration costs total $36 to $66, which consists of a $20 base tax, an $11 BMV fee, and a $5 deputy registrar fee, as well as $0 to $30 in permissive local motor vehicle license taxes, which vary based on district of registration. Beginning January 1, 2026, H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly increases the BMV fee to $16 and the deputy registrar service fee to $8, thus increasing annual passenger vehicle registration costs to $44 to $74.

[4] Special state reserved license plate numbers are available for a $25 fee and special reserved license plate numbers containing more than three letters or numerals are available for a $50 fee. Those fees are in addition to all other motor vehicle registration taxes and fees.

license plates are issued, the BMV will receive either $18.75 or $37.50, depending on the type of personalized license plate issued, $6.25 to $12.50 less than what is normally charged. Such revenue will be credited to Fund 5TM0.

According to the National Association of Chiefs of Police, a Law Enforcement Purple Heart may be issued to officers who are injured or disabled in the line of duty.[5] There is no comprehensive list of Law Enforcement Purple Heart recipients in Ohio, but LBO assumes the number of applications for such license plates will be relatively small.

The "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate is subject to existing law's implementation procedure, meaning that the Registrar of Motor Vehicles may require that written statements from at least 150 people indicating their intent to apply for and obtain the license plate be submitted. However, the Registrar may opt to exempt these requirements.

Criminal penalties

The bill prohibits willfully and falsefully representing eligibility as a Law Enforcement Purple Heart recipient to obtain the "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate and knowingly owning a motor vehicle that bears a "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate unless the owner is a Law Enforcement Purple Heart recipient. A violation of either provision is a fourth degree misdemeanor, which is subject to a fine of up to $250, a jail term of not more than 30 days, or both. As previously mentioned, LBO assumes that the number of applicants for the "Law Enforcement Purple Heart" license plate will be relatively small. As a result, the bill's criminal penalties are not expected to have a discernible, if any, fiscal effect on local criminal justice systems.

Highway designations

The table below summarizes details about the highways designated by the bill, including the location and the entity responsible for installing the signs. The cost of producing and installing signs is approximately $1,400. Signs usually need to be replaced every 12 to 15 years. ODOT produces the signs and is often responsible for the installation. However, if the designated highway is located within municipal boundaries, as is the case with 11 of the highways designated by this bill, the municipality may install the signs and may need to reimburse ODOT for the production costs.

Highway Designations

Designation	Roadway	County	Entity Responsible for Installation
Congressman David Hobson Memorial Highway	United States Route 33	Fairfield	ODOT
Congressman David Hobson Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 70	Clark	ODOT

[5] nacoponline.org/awards-law-enforcement.

Designation	Roadway	County	Entity Responsible for Installation
Officer Jacob J. Derbin Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 480	Cuyahoga	ODOT
John E. Gallagher Way	State Route 10	Cuyahoga	City of Cleveland
Chief of Police James G. Jackson Memorial Highway	Interstate 71	Franklin	City of Columbus
Patrolman Karl E. Bushong Memorial Highway	U.S. Route 20	Lake	ODOT
Patrolman Robert E. Karsmizki Memorial Highway	State Route 19	Crawford	City of Galion
Patrolman Charles G. Cannon Memorial Highway	U.S. Route 42	Greene	ODOT
PFC Chris Dixon Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 270	Franklin	ODOT
Patrolman Earnest E. Cole Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 75	Butler	ODOT
Marine PFC Glenn S. Wingenbach, Jr. Memorial Highway	State Route 13	Richland	City of Mansfield
Sgt. Andrew Lansing Memorial Bridge	State Route 207	Ross	ODOT
PFC Wetzel Eldridge USMC Memorial Highway	State Route 41	Clark	Village of North Hampton
PFC Francis Guillozet Memorial Highway	State Route 47	Shelby	ODOT
Dale McCauley Memorial Intersection	State Route 250 & McCauley Drive	Tuscarawas	City of Uhrichsville
83rd Ohio Division Memorial Highway	State Route 5	Portage & Trumbull	ODOT
PFC James Vincent PottKotter Memorial Highway	State Route 49	Darke	ODOT

Designation	Roadway	County	Entity Responsible for Installation
Deputy Larry Henderson Jr. Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 275	Franklin	ODOT
CPL Lindsey William Mitchell Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 70	Franklin & Fairfield	ODOT
Auxiliary Patrolman Earl Ulmer Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 77	Washington	ODOT
Patrolman Earl W. Casterline Memorial Highway	East Kemper Road	Hamilton	City of Sharonville & City of Springdale
Ohio State Highway Patrol Lt. Vance M. Andrews Memorial Highway	State Route 13	Knox	City of Mount Vernon
Navy Seaman Jadwisiak Memorial Highway	State Route 163	Ottawa	ODOT
PFC Thomas "Tommy" Pizzino Memorial Highway	U.S. Route 22	Harrison	ODOT
Staff Sergeant Melvin Trushel, Sr. Memorial Highway	U.S. Route 22	Harrison	ODOT
SPC Louis P. Shuster Memorial Interchange	Interchange of I-480 and West 150th Street in Cleveland	Cuyahoga	ODOT
Marshal Teddy Ray Holcomb Memorial Highway	State Route 13	Athens	City of Trimble & City of Glouster
MSGT Norman Michael Kilbarger Memorial Highway	Chillicothe Lancaster Road	Fairfield	ODOT
Deputy Sheriff Daniel Kin Memorial Highway	State Route 53	Wyandot	ODOT
Captain Joshua Michael McClimans Memorial Highway	State Route 241	Summit	City of Green
Cpl. Robert Dockstader Memorial Highway	State Route 2	Ottawa	ODOT

Designation	Roadway	County	Entity Responsible for Installation
SSG Jack W. Coy Veterans Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 280	Lucas	City of Oregon & City of Toledo
Tuscarawas Valley Memorial Highway	Interstate Route 70	Licking	ODOT
Detective Rex Emrick Memorial Highway	State Route 56	Pickaway	ODOT
U.S. Marine Staff Sergeant Thomas Evan Jadwisiak Memorial Overpass	State Route 305 Overpass Spanning State Route 11	Trumbull	ODOT
Clarence "Sonny" Smith, Jr. Memorial Highway	State Route 7	Mahoning	ODOT

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