

FIRST REGULAR SESSION
[TRULY AGREED TO AND FINALLY PASSED]
SENATE BILL NO. 111

91ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2001

0410S.01T

AN ACT

To repeal section 301.142, RSMo 2000, relating to license plates for the physically disabled, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to the same subject, with a penalty provision.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 301.142, RSMo 2000, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 301.142, to read as follows:

301.142. 1. As used in this section the term "physically disabled" means a natural person who is a blind person, as defined in section 8.700, RSMo, or a natural person with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk, as determined by a licensed physician as follows:

- (1) The person cannot walk fifty feet without stopping to rest; or
- (2) The person cannot walk without the use of, or assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person, prosthetic device, wheelchair, or other assistive device; or
- (3) Is restricted by lung disease to such an extent that the person's forced respiratory expiratory volume for one second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one liter, or the arterial oxygen tension is less than sixty mm/hg on room air at rest; or
- (4) Uses portable oxygen; or
- (5) Has a cardiac condition to the extent that the person's functional limitations are classified in severity as class III or class IV according to standards set by the American Heart Association; or

EXPLANATION--Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in this bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

(6) Is severely limited in the applicant's ability to walk due to an arthritic, neurological, or orthopedic condition.

2. "Temporarily disabled person" means a physically disabled person whose disability or incapacity can be expected to last for not more than one hundred eighty days.

3. Owners of motor vehicles who are residents of the state of Missouri, and who are physically disabled, owners of motor vehicles operated at least fifty percent of the time by a physically disabled person, or owners of motor vehicles used to transport physically disabled members of the owner's household may obtain disabled person license plates. Such owners, upon application, accompanied by the documents and fees provided for in this section, and by state motor vehicle laws relating to registration and licensing of motor vehicles shall be issued motor vehicle license plates for vehicles, other than commercial vehicles with a gross weight in excess of twenty-four thousand pounds, upon which shall be inscribed the international wheelchair accessibility symbol and the word "disabled" in addition to a combination of letters and numbers. Such license plates shall be made with fully reflective material with a common color scheme and design, shall be clearly visible at night, and shall be aesthetically attractive, as prescribed by section 301.130. Handicapped parking places may only be used when a physically disabled occupant is in the motor vehicle at the time of parking or when a physically disabled person is being delivered or collected by a properly marked vehicle which is parked for the sole use of the physically disabled person. No vehicle shall park in the access aisle. Such parking violation shall be an infraction. The use of a vehicle displaying a disabled license plate or windshield placard to park in a parking space designated for the disabled by a person not transporting the individual for whom the license or placard was issued shall be an infraction. Upon conviction thereof, violators shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty dollars nor more than three hundred dollars.

4. No additional fee shall be paid to the director of revenue for the issuance of the special license plates provided in this section, except for special personalized license plates and other license plates described in this subsection. Priority for any specific set of special license plates shall be given to the applicant who received the number in the immediately preceding license period subject to the applicant's compliance with the provisions of this section and any applicable rules or regulations issued by the director. If determined feasible by the advisory committee established in section 301.129, any special license plate issued pursuant to this section may be adapted to also include the international wheelchair accessibility symbol and the word "disabled" as prescribed in subsection 3 of this section and such plate may be issued to any applicant who meets the requirements of this section and the other appropriate provision of this chapter, subject to the requirements and fees of the appropriate provision of this chapter.

5. Any physically disabled person, or the parent or guardian of any such person, or any not for profit group, organization, or other entity which transports more than one physically disabled person, may apply to the director of revenue for a removable windshield placard to be hung from

the rearview mirror of a parked motor vehicle. When there is no rearview mirror, the placard shall be displayed on the dashboard on the driver's side. The removable windshield placard shall conform to the specifications, in respect to size, color, and content, as set forth in federal regulations published by the Department of Transportation. The fee for each removable windshield placard shall be two dollars and the removable windshield placard shall be renewed every year. Only one removable placard may be issued to an applicant who has been issued disabled person license plates. Upon request, one additional windshield placard shall be issued to an applicant who has not been issued disabled person license plates. A temporary windshield placard shall be issued to any physically disabled person, or the parent or guardian of any such person who otherwise qualifies except that the physical disability, in the opinion of the physician, is not expected to exceed a period of one hundred eighty days. The temporary windshield placard shall conform to the specifications, in respect to size, color, and content, as set forth in federal regulations published by the Department of Transportation. The fee for the temporary windshield placard shall be two dollars. Upon request, one additional temporary windshield placard shall be issued to an applicant. Temporary windshield placards shall be issued upon presentation of the physician's statement provided by this section and shall be displayed in the same manner as removable windshield placards. A person or entity shall be qualified to possess and display a temporary removable windshield placard for six months and the placard may be renewed once for an additional six months if a physician's statement pursuant to subsection 6 of this section is supplied to the director of revenue at the time of renewal. The placard shall be renewable only by the person or entity to which the placard was originally issued. Any placard issued pursuant to this section shall only be used when a physically disabled occupant is in the motor vehicle at the time of parking or when a physically disabled person is being delivered or collected by a properly marked vehicle which is parked for the sole use of the physically disabled person.

6. Application for license plates or windshield placards issued pursuant to this section shall be made to the director of revenue and shall be accompanied by a statement signed by a licensed physician which certifies that the applicant, user, or member of the applicant's household is a physically disabled person as defined by this section. The physician's statement shall be on a form prescribed by the director of revenue which shall include the physician's license number. If it is the professional opinion of the physician who issues the statement that the physical disability of the applicant, user, or member of the applicant's household is permanent, this shall be noted on the statement. In such instances, the applicant shall present the physician's statement which states that the applicant's disability is permanent to the director of revenue the first time the applicant applies for license plates or a removable windshield placard. The applicant shall not be required to obtain a new physician's statement each time that the applicant applies for or renews license plates or a removable windshield placard; but, the applicant shall present a physician's statement each time the applicant applies for a temporary windshield placard or renews a temporary

windshield placard. Such physician's statement shall state the expiration date for the temporary windshield placard. If the physician fails to record an expiration date on the physician's statement, the director shall issue the temporary windshield placard for a period of thirty days. The director of revenue upon receiving a physician's statement pursuant to this subsection shall check with the state board of registration for the healing arts created in section 334.120, RSMo, or the Missouri state board of chiropractic examiners established in section 331.090, RSMo, with respect to physician's statements signed by licensed chiropractors, or with the board of optometry established in section 336.130, RSMo, with respect to physician's statements signed by licensed optometrists, or the state board of podiatric medicine created in section 330.100, RSMo, with respect to physician's statements signed by physicians of the foot or podiatrists to determine whether the physician is duly licensed and registered pursuant to law. The boards shall cooperate with the director and shall supply information requested pursuant to this subsection. The director may, in cooperation with the boards which shall assist the director, establish a list of all physicians' names and of any other information necessary to administer this subsection within the department of revenue if the director determines that such listing is necessary to carry out the provisions of this subsection.

7. Where the owner's application is based on the fact that the vehicle is used at least fifty percent of the time by a physically disabled person, the applicant shall submit an affidavit stating this fact, in addition to the physician's statement. The affidavit shall be signed by both the owner of the vehicle and the physically disabled person. The applicant shall be required to submit this affidavit with each application for license plates.

8. The director of revenue shall enter into reciprocity agreements with other states **or the federal government** for the purpose of recognizing disabled person license plates or windshield placards issued to physically disabled persons [in those states].

9. When a person to whom disabled person license plates or a removable or temporary windshield placard or both have been issued dies, the personal representative of such person shall return the plates or placards or both to the director of revenue under penalty of law. The director of revenue may order any person issued disabled person license plates or windshield placards to submit to an examination by a chiropractor, osteopath, or physician, or to such other investigation as will determine whether such person qualifies for the special plates or placards. If such person refuses to submit or is found to no longer qualify for special plates or placards provided for in this section, the director of revenue shall collect the special plates or placards, and shall furnish license plates to replace the ones collected as provided by this chapter.

10. In the event a removable or temporary windshield placard is lost, stolen, or mutilated, the lawful holder thereof shall, within five days, file with the director of revenue an application and an affidavit stating such fact, in order to purchase a new placard. The fee for the replacement windshield placard shall be two dollars.

11. Beginning after September 1, 1998, and prior to August 31, 1999, the director of revenue shall authorize a one-time recertification and review of all permanent disabled person license plates and windshield placards, including physician's license numbers and related information that the director has on file pursuant to subsection 6 of this section to determine if such numbers and information are current and correct. The director shall require the presentation of a new physician's statement and other information deemed necessary by the director to administer the provisions of this section. The recertification and review shall be conducted in a manner as determined by the director.

12. Fraudulent application, renewal, issuance, procurement or use of disabled person license plates or windshield placards shall be a class A misdemeanor. It is a class B misdemeanor for a physician, chiropractor, podiatrist or optometrist to certify that an individual or family member is qualified for a license plate or windshield placard based on a disability, the diagnosis of which is outside their scope of practice or if there is no basis for the diagnosis.

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