



**House  
Legislative  
Analysis  
Section**

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**CHANGE VANITY PLATE REGIS. DATE**

**House Bill 4238** as enrolled  
Second Analysis (1-18-89)

**RECEIVED**

**FEB 08 1989**

**Sponsor: Rep. Lynn Owen**

**House Committee: Transportation** Mich. State Law Library

**Senate Committee: Regulatory Affairs**

***THE APPARENT PROBLEM:***

The secretary of state believes that efficiency and fairness in handling personalized and amateur radio operator registration plates needs improvement, and has requested legislation to implement changes.

***THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:***

The Michigan Vehicle Code provides that amateur ("ham") radio operators may apply for vehicle registration plates inscribed with the applicant's radio license numbers. The bill would amend the code so that the fees collected for this service would be credited to the Michigan Transportation Fund. The bill would also amend the code to change the expiration dates of both personalized ("vanity") and ham operator registrations from March 31 to that of the registrant's birthday.

The bill would prorate on a monthly basis the \$25 annual service fee for personalized registrations issued for less than one year. Under the bill, the Secretary of State would be allowed to issue a temporary permit for personalized registration application in cases where the personalized registration would not be manufactured before the expiration of the regular registration. The temporary permit would be issued at no charge and would be valid for no more than 60 days.

In addition, the bill would eliminate the letter and number restrictions for motorcycle plates and would allow handicappers to receive vanity plates by providing for the issuance of handicapper tabs to be used on special plates.

MCL 257.217a et al.

***FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:***

According to the secretary of state's office, the bill would generate approximately \$2 million in revenue from the expected sale of vanity plates and would cost the state \$500,000 million to administer. (1-17-89)

***ARGUMENTS:***

***For:***

Under present law, both personalized (or "vanity") registrations and amateur ("ham") radio operator registrations expire on March 31. The secretary of state processes approximately 14,000 personalized registrations and 2,000 ham radio operator registrations a year. Allowing the department to accept registrations on a year-round basis, based on the birth date of the registrant, would help speed processing of these applications and would be more convenient for the applicants.

***For:***

Since vanity and ham radio operator registration plates are made on a special order basis for each registration, allowing the secretary of state to issue a temporary permit

(for no extra charge) for applications when the special plates would not be manufactured prior to the expiration of the regular registration would insure that the applicants did not suffer a lapse in their registrations.

***For:***

Allowing the secretary of state to prorate the \$25 service fee for special registrations, either personalized or ham radio operator, would be fairer to applicants applying for registrations expiring in less than a year than charging them the full yearly fee.

***For:***

The Michigan Vehicle Code currently restricts the numbers and letters allowed on personalized motorcycle plates. In addition, handicappers are effectively prohibited from obtaining vanity plates because there are no provisions in the code for a tab which would identify a vanity plate as belonging to a handicapper. In both instances, the personalization of a plate is limited. The bill will address these issues by deleting the letter and number restrictions on motorcycle plates and providing for a handicapper tab to be used on all special plates, such as vanity plates and veteran's plates.

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