



Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

BILL



ANALYSIS

Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986

Senate Bill 853 (as introduced 11-19-11)
Sponsor: Senator Judy E. Emmons
Committee: Transportation

(as enrolled)

Date Completed: 12-5-11

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Driver Education Provider and Instructor Act to revise requirements for a criminal history check of instructors and providers' representatives, by requiring a fingerprint-based system that would automatically provide notice of subsequent arrests.

The bill also would refer to six, rather than seven, hours of behind-the-wheel experience in a section prescribing driver training curricula.

Criminal History Check

The Act requires a certified instructor and the designated representative or coordinator of a certified driver education provider to complete a criminal history check every four years. The criminal history check must be performed by the Michigan Department of State Police (MSP) and the FBI. Under the bill, the criminal history check would have to be fingerprint-based.

Currently, a person required to have a criminal history check must send a request to the MSP. The bill also would require the person to submit his or her fingerprints to the State Police.

The Act required the Department of Information Technology (now within the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget) to work with the Secretary of State and the MSP to develop and implement an automated program that does an annual comparison of the conviction information received by the MSP with a Secretary of State list of people holding a driver education provider or instructor certificate, and the people designated as a representative or coordinator of a provider. The bill would delete this requirement.

The bill would require the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget, in collaboration with the State Police, to establish an automated fingerprint identification system database that would allow the MSP to store and maintain all fingerprints submitted under the Act, and that provided for automatic notification at the time a subsequent criminal arrest fingerprint card submitted into the system matched a set of prints previously submitted under the Act. Upon that notification, the MSP immediately would have to notify the Department of State, which would have to review the information in accordance with the criminal history record information criteria for an instructor under the Act.

Information in the database would be confidential, would not be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, and could not be disclosed to any person except for purposes of the Driver Education Provider and Instructor Act or law enforcement purposes.

Driver Training

Section 35 of the Act requires a driver education provider to use either a model curriculum prescribed by the Secretary of State or an approved alternative curriculum. Under a segment 1 curriculum and a segment 2 curriculum combined, each student must receive at least 30 hours of classroom instruction and seven hours of behind-the-wheel experience. The bill would refer, instead, to six hours of behind-the-wheel experience.

(Section 37 of the Act prescribes requirements for a segment 1 curriculum, including at least six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction or substitute hours. Section 39, which contains criteria for segment 2, does not include a behind-the-wheel instruction requirement.)

MCL 256.649 et al.

Legislative Analyst: Suzanne Lowe

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would make technical changes in order to make the background check language consistent with requirements for other professions and continue the Federal fingerprint-based process. There would be no new costs related to the bill.

Fiscal Analyst: Bruce Baker
Bill Bowerman

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.