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SFA



BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 906 (as enrolled)
Sponsor: Senator Ken Sikkema
Committee: Economic Development, International Trade and Regulatory Affairs

Date Completed: 7-27-00

RATIONALE

Since 1975, all persons who repair motor vehicles for compensation in any category of major repair must be certified by the State of Michigan. A mechanic certified in all of the following automobile and light truck repair categories is considered a master automobile mechanic: engine repair; engine tune-up and performance; front end, suspension and steering systems; brakes and braking systems; automatic transmission; manual transmission, front and rear drive axles; electrical systems; and heating and air conditioning. Individuals performing mechanical repairs who have passed an examination in at least one but less than all of the above categories are considered specialty mechanics in the category of repair work for which they passed an exam. In 1998, the State began to require recertification of mechanics every five years through a mechanic recertification test or class. The tests, however, incorporate knowledge of high technology changes, such as on-board computer systems, catalytic converters, and anti-lock brakes, all of which are not present in pre-1973 cars. Therefore, it has been suggested that a person who specializes in repairs on pre-1973 motor vehicles should be considered under a separate category for certification as a specialty mechanic.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Motor Vehicle Service and Repair Act to allow a person to become certified as a specialty mechanic for repairs on pre-1973 motor vehicles if that person passed an examination developed by the administrator or a private entity and adopted by the administrator. ("Administrator" means the Secretary of State or his or her designee.) Within 90 days after the bill's effective date, the administrator would have to develop or adopt an examination for specialty mechanic certification in the pre-1973 motor vehicle repair category for an individual engaged, for compensation, in the repair of a motor vehicle manufactured before 1973 or the reconditioning, replacement, adjustment, or alteration of the operating condition of any component or

subassembly of a motor vehicle manufactured before 1973.

Under the Act, a person may become certified as a specialty mechanic if he or she has passed an examination that the administrator determines is an adequate test of a person's ability to perform certain types of motor vehicle repair. The repair categories include engine repair, automatic transmission, manual transmission and rear axle, front end, brakes, electrical systems, heating and air conditioning, and engine tune-up. The bill would add pre-1973 motor vehicle to the categories.

Currently, a person may apply for and receive a master mechanic's certificate if he or she is qualified as a specialty mechanic in all categories of vehicle repair. The bill specifies that the specialty category for repair on pre-1973 motor vehicles would not be necessary for a master mechanic's certificate.

MCL 257.1310

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

9Supporting Argument

The bill would recognize and certify separately those wishing to specialize in pre-1973 vehicle repair, which would permit them to take a separate examination containing relevant information to obtain a certificate to practice. In addition to seeing advanced technology changes in the auto industry, 1973 was the year that several emission control devices became mandatory in vehicles, and a lack of knowledge of these changes and devices could cause problems. The bill would regulate and require proper training for those repairing pre-1973 vehicles, and reinforce qualification standards to maintain a high standard of practice for specialty categories. In addition, the new category of specialty certification

would help uphold the integrity and validity of the profession and protect its clientele.

Legislative Analyst: N. Nagata

FISCAL IMPACT

The State could incur administrative costs for the administration of the testing program. The State also could incur contracting costs for the development of certification exams. Because the cost of development is unknown, the fiscal impact is indeterminate.

Fiscal Analyst: E. Limbs

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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.