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SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

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Senate Bill 362 (Substitute S-1 as passed by the Senate)
Sponsor: Senator Bev Hammerstrom
Committee: Transportation and Tourism

Date Completed: 4-24-01

RATIONALE

Under the Michigan Vehicle Code, the term "disabled person" or a "person with disabilities" means an individual who is determined by a physician or optometrist licensed to practice in Michigan to have one or more physical characteristics, as specified in the Code. A disabled person may apply to the Secretary of State for a temporary or permanent windshield placard that entitles the person to park in spaces designated for use by handicappers and to park for free in metered spaces and public lots and ramps. Also, a licensed driver may apply for a free parking sticker if a physician licensed to practice in the State attests to the nature and estimated duration of the applicant's disabling condition and verifies that the applicant qualifies for a free parking sticker. (A physician's statement is not required, however, if it is obvious that an individual has a qualifying disability.)

Some Michigan residents live in communities that border another state and are patients of physicians who are licensed by and have established practices in the neighboring state. In addition, some Michigan residents are treated at medical facilities located outside the State and are under the care of physicians at those facilities who are licensed by the states in which the facilities are located. While these physicians could certify that an individual is disabled, a Michigan resident in these circumstances cannot receive a windshield placard, special registration plate, or free parking sticker because his or her physician is not licensed to practice in this State. Thus, some people believe that disabled individuals should be permitted to submit an application for handicapper parking signed by an out-of-state physician.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to permit the Secretary of State to accept from a disabled individual an application for a windshield placard, special registration plate, or free parking sticker that was signed by a physician licensed to practice in another state if the application were accompanied by a copy of that physician's current medical license issued by that state.

MCL 257.675

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.)

Supporting Argument

There are some individuals across the State who have disabling conditions that would make them eligible for a windshield placard, special registration plate, or free parking sticker, except that the individuals' physicians are not licensed in Michigan. For example, some people might live in Michigan but work in Toledo, Ohio, and receive medical benefits from an HMO, under contract with the employer, that is located in Toledo and refers patients to physicians who are licensed in Ohio. Some residents of the Upper Peninsula face the same problem because their physicians are licensed by and have established their practices in Wisconsin. There also are State residents who are patients at medical facilities located outside of Michigan, such as the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, and remain under the care of physicians at those facilities. In addition, some Michigan residents reside for part of the year in this State and for

the remainder of the year in another state, such as Florida, and are patients of physicians licensed in that state. Even though the out-of-state physicians could certify that their Michigan patients have disabling conditions that would qualify them for handicapper parking privileges, these individuals are not eligible for the privileges because their physicians are not licensed in Michigan. By permitting the Secretary of State to accept an application for handicapper parking that was signed by an out-of-state physician and accompanied by a copy of his or her current medical license, the bill would enable Michigan residents who are patients of physicians licensed to practice in another state to receive a handicapper parking plate, placard, or sticker.

Legislative Analyst: L. Arasim

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: J. Runnels

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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.