

HB 976 -- Disabled License Plates and Placards

Sponsor: Schlottach

This bill:

- (1) Changes the fraudulent procurement or use of a disabled license plate or placard from a class C misdemeanor to a class A misdemeanor;
- (2) Changes the penalty for certifying an individual for a disabled plate or placard outside the practitioner's scope from a class C misdemeanor to a class A misdemeanor and requires certification to meet certain standards;
- (3) Allows other health care practitioners (chiropractors, podiatrists, and optometrists) to certify individuals for disabled license plates or placards;
- (4) Excludes age as a factor in determining whether a person is entitled to a disabled license plate or placard;
- (5) Establishes record maintenance requirements for physicians and health care practitioners who issue physician's statements for disabled license plates or placards. These records must be open to inspection and review by the physician's licensing board to verify compliance with the bill;
- (6) Requires physicians' statements to be on a form prescribed by the Director of the Department of Revenue, state the specific diagnosis which renders the person physically disabled, include the physician's license number, and be signed by the physician or health care practitioner;
- (7) Limits to two the number of removable windshield handicap placards that may be issued by the director to any one person;
- (8) Increases the fee for removable windshield handicap placards from \$2 to \$4;
- (9) Limits the use of the placard to when the person is in the motor vehicle at the time of parking or when the person is being delivered;
- (10) Requires every applicant or renewal for a disabled license plate or placard, beginning August 1, 2005, to present a new physician's statement dated no more than 90 days prior to the application. Thereafter, the director must not renew pre-existing disabled plates or placards unless the applicant furnishes a new physician's statement every four years; and

(11) Makes any person who cannot produce the certificate which authorizes him or her to park in a disabled parking space guilty of a class A misdemeanor. If a person can later produce a valid certificate in court, the person will not be found guilty. Placards can only be used when the vehicle is parked in a disabled parking space.

The bill has an effective date of January 1, 2005.