



## **H.B. 129**

125th General Assembly

(As Reported by H. Transportation and Public Safety)

**Reps. Young, Fessler, McGregor, Driehaus, Seitz, Flowers, Schaffer, Reidelbach, Aslanides, Distel, Brinkman, Wagner, Hagan, Collier, Cates, Gilb, Schmidt, Schneider, Grendell, Willamowski, Seaver, Callender, Clancy, Hoops, Faber, Buehrer, Trakas, Setzer, Oelslager, Williams, Niehaus, Wolpert, Husted, Kearns, Reinhard, Schlichter**

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### **BILL SUMMARY**

- Authorizes the issuance of a "Choose Life" license plate bearing an identifying marking designed by Choose Life, Inc., and approved by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.
- Requires the Registrar to collect a contribution in the amount of \$20 plus a \$10 processing fee for each application for registration and registration renewal that involves "Choose Life" license plates.
- Requires the contributions collected from persons who are issued the license plates to be deposited into the "Choose Life" Fund, which the bill creates, and paid by the Director of Health to certain eligible private, nonprofit organizations.

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### **CONTENT AND OPERATION**

#### **"Choose Life" license plates**

Under the bill, the owner or lessee of any passenger car, noncommercial motor vehicle, motor home, or other vehicle of a class approved by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles may apply to the Registrar for the registration of the vehicle and issuance of "Choose Life" license plates. The application for "Choose Life" license plates may be combined with a request for a special reserved license plate provided in current law. Upon receipt of the completed application and compliance with the requirements of the bill, the Registrar is required to issue to the applicant the appropriate vehicle registration and a set of "Choose Life" license

plates with a validation sticker, or a validation sticker alone when required by current law.

In addition to the letters and numbers ordinarily inscribed on license plates, "Choose Life" license plates must be inscribed with the words "Choose Life" and a marking designed by Choose Life, Inc., a private, nonprofit Florida corporation. The Registrar must review the design and must approve it if it is feasible. If the design is not feasible, the Registrar must notify Choose Life, Inc. of this fact and the organization may resubmit designs until a feasible design is approved. The license plates must bear county identification stickers that identify the county of registration by name or number. (Sec. 4503.74(A).)

"Choose Life" license plates and a validation sticker are issued upon receipt of a contribution of \$20 as provided in the bill (see below); payment of the regular license tax prescribed in current law, any applicable local motor vehicle tax, any applicable special reserved license plate fee, and a fee of \$10 for the purpose of compensating the Bureau of Motor Vehicles for additional services required in the issuing of "Choose Life" license plates; and compliance with all other applicable laws relating to the registration of motor vehicles. (Sec. 4503.74(B) and (C).)

For each application for registration and registration renewal that the Registrar receives under the bill, the Registrar is required to collect a contribution of \$20 and transmit it to the Treasurer of State for deposit in the "Choose Life" Fund, which the bill creates (see below). The Registrar also is required to deposit into the existing state Bureau of Motor Vehicles Fund the additional \$10 fee that the applicant pays for the purpose of compensating the Bureau. (Sec. 4503.74(C).)

### **"Choose Life" Fund**

The bill creates in the state treasury the "Choose Life" Fund, consisting of the contributions that are paid to the Registrar by applicants who elect to obtain "Choose Life" license plates and of money from the Fund that was distributed by the Director of Health to an eligible organization but was returned by the organization because it was not expended (see below). All investment earnings of the Fund must be credited to the Fund. (Sec. 3701.65.)

Under the bill, the Director of Health at least annually must distribute the money in the Fund to any private, nonprofit organization that is eligible to receive funds under the bill and that applies for funding. The Director must distribute the funds based on the county in which the organization applying for funding is located and in proportion to the number of "Choose Life" license plates issued during the preceding year to vehicles registered in that county. Within each county, eligible organizations that apply for funding must share equally in the funds available for distribution to organizations located within that county.

The Director is required to develop an application form for funds and may determine the funding schedule and procedures. The application must inform the applicant of the conditions for receiving and using such funds. The application must require evidence that the organization meets all of the following requirements:

- (1) It is a private, nonprofit organization;
- (2) It is committed to counseling pregnant women about the option of adoption;
- (3) It provides services within the state to pregnant women who are planning to place their children for adoption, including counseling and meeting the material needs of the women;
- (4) It does not charge women for any services received;
- (5) It is not involved or associated with any abortion activities, including counseling for or referrals to abortion clinics, providing medical abortion-related procedures, or pro-abortion advertising;
- (6) It does not discriminate in its provision of any services on the basis of race, religion, color, marital status, national origin, handicap, gender, or age.

The Director is prohibited from distributing funds to an organization that does not provide verifiable evidence of meeting the above requirements and may not provide additional funds to any organization that fails to comply with provisions of the bill regarding its previous receipt of funds.

An organization that receives funds is required to do all of the following:

- (1) Use not more than 60% of the funds for the material needs of pregnant women who are planning to place their children for adoption or for infants awaiting placement with adoptive parents, including clothing, housing, medical care, food, utilities, and transportation;
- (2) Use not more than 40% of the funds for counseling, training, or advertising;
- (3) Not use any of those funds for administrative expenses, legal expenses, or capital expenditures;
- (4) Annually return to the Choose Life Fund any unused money that exceeds 10% of the money distributed to the organization.

The organization must submit to the Director an annual audited financial statement verifying its compliance with these funding requirements.

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## HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	03-18-03	p. 258
Reported, H. Transportation & Public Safety	11-06-03	pp. 1054-1055

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