



**SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE**  
**STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT**  
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*This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.*

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<b>Bill Number:</b>	H. 3086	Introduced on January 12, 2021
<b>Author:</b>	Rutherford	
<b>Subject:</b>	License Plate Display	
<b>Requestor:</b>	House Education and Public Works	
<b>RFA Analyst(s):</b>	Gardner and Griffith	
<b>Impact Date:</b>	March 15, 2021 Updated for Additional Agency Response	

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### **Fiscal Impact Summary**

This bill prohibits a law enforcement officer from stopping the driver of a vehicle having a license plate frame that obscures the plate's figures when the driver has caused no other violations. The Judicial Department anticipates any increased expenditures will be minimal and can be managed within existing General Fund resources.

The Department of Public Safety reports that the expenditure and revenue impact of the bill on the agency's General Fund, Other Funds, and Federal Funds is undetermined.

The Department of Motor Vehicles indicates that there is no expenditure impact to the agency because it does not operationally affect the department.

The Municipal Association of South Carolina and local governments were contacted about the potential expenditure impact of the bill. York County provided a response that indicated the bill will have no expenditure impact.

This fiscal impact has been updated for an additional response from the Department of Public Safety.

### **Explanation of Fiscal Impact**

**Updated for Additional Agency Response on March 15, 2021**

**Introduced on January 12, 2021**

#### **State Expenditure**

This bill, which amends existing law related to the placement and presentation of motor vehicle license plates, prohibits a law enforcement officer from stopping the driver of a motor vehicle with a license plate frame that obscures the plate's letters or numbers in the absence of a violation of another motor vehicle law.

**Judicial Department.** This bill prohibits a law enforcement officer from stopping the driver of a vehicle having a license plate frame that obscures the plate's figures when the driver has caused no other violations. The department reports that since the bill creates new defenses, there is no data with which to determine the number of general sessions, magistrate, or municipal court

filings, hearings, or trials that may be affected. The department estimates the bill will have a minimal expenditure impact, the cost of which can be managed using existing General Fund resources.

**Department of Public Safety.** This bill prohibits a law enforcement officer from stopping the driver of a motor vehicle having a license plate frame that obscures the plate's letters or numbers in the absence of a violation of another motor vehicle law. Due to recent increases in vehicle pursuits and hit and run collisions in the state, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) is concerned that the implementation of the bill will prevent proactive efforts by law enforcement to solve such crimes, which rely significantly on witness accounts or technology that would capture the vehicle identification. If, under the provisions of the bill, vehicle plate figures are obscured such that law enforcement efforts are hampered, DPS asserts that its expenditures related to such efforts will increase in an amount that cannot currently be quantified. Therefore, the expenditure impact of the bill on the agency's General Fund, Other Funds, and Federal Funds is undetermined.

**Department of Motor Vehicles.** DMV indicates that there is no expenditure impact to the agency because it does not operationally affect the department.

#### **State Revenue**

**Department of Public Safety.** This bill prohibits a law enforcement officer from stopping the driver of a motor vehicle having a license plate frame that obscures the plate's letters or numbers in the absence of a violation of another motor vehicle law. DPS believes that the provisions of the bill may deter persons from continuing to purchase proper vehicle licenses, which may result in a loss of revenue to the agency that cannot currently be quantified.

#### **Local Expenditure**

The Municipal Association of South Carolina and local governments were contacted about the potential expenditure impact of the bill. York County provided a response that indicated the bill will have no expenditure impact.

#### **Local Revenue**

N/A

#### **Introduced on January 12, 2021**

##### **State Expenditure**

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**Judicial Department.** This bill prohibits a law enforcement officer from stopping the driver of a vehicle having a license plate frame that obscures the plate's figures when the driver has caused no other violations. The department reports that since the bill creates new defenses, there is no data with which to determine the number of general sessions, magistrate, or municipal court

filings, hearings, or trials that may be affected. The department estimates the bill will have a minimal expenditure impact, the cost of which can be managed using existing General Fund resources.

**Department of Public Safety.** The expenditure impact of the bill is pending, contingent upon a response from the agency.

**Department of Motor Vehicles.** DMV indicates that there is no expenditure impact to the agency because it does not operationally affect the department.

**State Revenue**

N/A

**Local Expenditure**

The Municipal Association of South Carolina and local governments were contacted about the potential expenditure impact of the bill. York County provided a response that indicated the bill will have no expenditure impact.

**Local Revenue**

N/A



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Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director