
Transportation Committee

HB 1687

Brief Description: Addressing vehicle service fees.

Sponsors: Representatives Eslick, Goodman, Low, Robertson, Leavitt, Bronoske, Barkis and Dent.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases service fees on vehicle registrations and titling transactions collected by county auditors, subagents and the Department of Licensing.
- Prescribes an adjustment every three years, beginning July 1, 2023, based upon 5 percent per annum plus changes in the consumer price index during that time period, rounded up to the nearest 5 cents.

Hearing Date: 2/20/23

Staff: Beth Redfield (786-7140).

Background:

Vehicle registration and title transactions and associated fees are largely processed by agents and subagents of the Department of Licensing (DOL). Agents are generally county auditors and subagents are recommended by a county auditor or other agent and appointed by the director of the DOL. Not all counties have subagents. Subagencies are typically private businesses who collect fees on behalf of the state and provide associated customer service.

The DOL, county auditor or other agent, or subagent collects a service fee of:

- \$15 for changes in a vehicle title certificate or for verification of record and preparation of an affidavit of lost title; and

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- \$8 for a registration renewal, issuing a transit permit, accepting a vessel registration, accepting a report of sale, and accepting a transitional ownership record.

The service fees collected by the DOL or a county auditor or other agent must be deposited into the state Capital Vessel Replacement Account. The service fees collected by subagents are retained by the subagent's business.

Service fees are in addition to all other fees and taxes due at vehicle registration or titling.

Summary of Bill:

Service fees collected by county auditors, subagents and the DOL must be adjusted for inflation every three years, beginning July 1, 2023, based upon 5 percent per annum plus changes in the consumer price index during that time period, rounded up to the nearest 5 cents.

During the first quarter of the year preceding the scheduled inflationary adjustment, the DOL is required to gather stakeholder comment on the anticipated adjustment.

For purposes of this section, "consumer price index" is defined as the average consumer price index for any calendar year for the Washington area for all urban consumers, compiled by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics or its successor agency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2023.