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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anthony Portantino, Chair  
2023 - 2024 Regular Session

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### **SB 608 (Becker) - Child health and safety: “Have a Heart, Be a Star, Help Our Kids” license plate program**

**Version:** February 15, 2023

**Policy Vote:** HUMAN S. 5 - 0,  
TRANS. 14 - 0

**Urgency:** No

**Mandate:** No

**Hearing Date:** April 24, 2023

**Consultant:** Agnes Lee

**Bill Summary:** SB 608 would increase the fees for issuance and renewal of “Have a Heart, Be a Star, Help our Kids” (Kids’ Plate) license plates and would revise the allocation of funds derived from that program.

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

- According to the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Kids Plate program revenues to the Child Health and Safety Fund were \$3,371,401 in 2019-20, \$3,237,394 in 2020-21, and \$3,018,705 in 2021-22. DMV does not anticipate significant workload costs to implement the proposed fee increases.

Staff notes unknown increased fee revenues to the Child Health and Safety Fund. While fees would nearly double, the number of vehicle owners that choose to apply for or renew the Kids’ Plate license plates has declined in recent years.

- The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) estimates a reduction of over \$2 million annually from the Child Health and Safety Fund for child care licensing activities under the proposed redirection of funds. This would result in General Fund cost pressures to backfill the loss in revenues to support the child care licensing program.
- The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) estimates a reduction in CDPH’s annual allocation from the Child Health and Safety Fund from \$526,000 to approximately \$200,000 for programs that fund unintentional injury prevention grants to counties and other community-based organizations. The CDPH anticipates a potential reduction in administrative workload as there would be less local funding to administer and oversee.

**Background:** The Kids’ Plate program allows vehicle owners to choose a hand, heart, star or plus sign for their license plate. Fees generated from the Kids’ Plate program are deposited into the Child Health and Safety Fund and upon appropriation, used for regulation of licensed child care facilities, child abuse prevention programs, and efforts to prevent childhood injuries.

Current law specifies that the first 50 percent of the Kids’ Plate revenues plus an additional \$501,000 is dedicated to support CDSS’ responsibilities for child care licensing. Up to 25 percent of the remaining funds support child abuse prevention efforts

administered by the counties and CDSS. The remaining funds support programs that address child injury prevention.

**Proposed Law:** Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Increase the fee for a Kids' Plate special license plate, whose character sequence is determined by the license owner or applicant, from \$50 to \$90 for initial issuance and from \$40 to \$80 for renewal.
- Increase the fee for a Kids' Plate special license plate, whose character sequence is determined by the DMV, from \$20 to \$40 for initial issuance and from \$15 to \$30 for renewal.
- Specify a new allocation of moneys in the Child Health and Safety Fund derived from the license plate program fees collected on or after January 1, 2024:
  - 5 percent, continuously appropriated, to the CDPH in support of the department's injury prevention branch addressing childhood injury prevention.
  - 20 percent, continuously appropriated, to First 5 county commissions, as specified.
  - 50 percent, continuously appropriated, to childcare safety and health programs, of which 85 percent would be allocated to local childcare planning councils and 15 percent to the state for child care provider health and safety education and training.
  - 25 percent, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for child abuse prevention programs.

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