

OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

Date: February 23, 2021
To: Transportation Committee
From: Sam Praver, Legislative Analyst

LD 79 – An Act To Establish a Honeybee Special Registration Plate

SUMMARY: This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill proposes to create the honeybee special registration plate. The proceeds from the special registration plate are administered by the State Apiarist to support research and beekeeping assistance efforts.

TESTIMONY:

<p>Proponents: <i>Rep. Lyford, Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As pollinators, bees are important to Maine agricultural industries such as wild blueberries.• Proceeds could be used to fund a discretionary spending account to better support the valuable work of the Maine State Apiarist, who provides Maine’s beekeepers with reliable accurate information, and manages and monitors the influx of hives in the spring.	<p>Opponents: <i>Bureau of Motor Vehicles</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maine currently has 63 different registration plates. Managing an ever-growing number of approved plates and requests for new plates has become an expanding task for staff at the bureau, for municipal partners, and plate manufacturing staff.• There is a process in Title 29A, sections 468 and 468-A, by which new specialty plates are reviewed, authorized and enacted. This plate request is a “special registration plate,” a similar process as within section 468 should be established to provide some structure and viability of plate sales.• A general estimate to create a new plate is roughly \$42,000 for 4,800 plates which does not include the BMV staff time spent, vendor, plate shop personnel and municipal partners. The “start-up” cost of this plate would be borne by the bureau and not the sponsor as with specialty plates following the established process.
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CURRENT STATUTE OR LAW:

The Legislature has set in statute a process for Bureau of Motor Vehicles to follow in establishing new specialty plates. That process is in [29-A MRS §468 \(Specialty License Plates\)](#) and [29-A MRS §468-A \(Recognition License Plates\)](#).

TECHNICAL ISSUES:

This bill is a concept draft, no proposed language is provided in the bill.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No preliminary fiscal information available at the time of writing.