

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**LEGISLATIVE BILL REVIEW FORM: 2015**

Bill Number: H.259 Name of Bill: Motor vehicles; Law Enforcement vehicles; Fire Department vehicles; EMS service vehicles; lights

Agency/Dept: DPS/VSP Author of Bill Review: Sgt. Mark A. Perkins (mark.perkins@state.vt.us)

Date of Bill Review: March 10, 2015 Related Bills and Key Players: \_\_\_\_\_

Status of Bill: (check one)

☒ Upon Introduction ☐ As passed by 1<sup>st</sup> body ☐ As passed by both bodies

Recommended Position:

☐ Support ☒ Oppose ☐ Remain Neutral ☐ Support with modifications identified in # 8 below

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**Analysis of Bill**

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**1. Summary of bill and issue it addresses.** *Describe what the bill is intended to accomplish and why.*

This Bill proposes to authorize the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to issue a permit for;

1. The use of red or amber signal lights on law enforcement vehicles; and
2. The use of one blue light on a Fire Department or EMS vehicle, provided the light is mounted so as to be visible primarily from the rear of the vehicle.

**2. Is there a need for this bill?** *Please explain why or why not.*

No, historically in Vermont, police vehicles are permitted to use a blue light and fire vehicles are permitted to use a red light, which the public is accustomed to. There is no data to show an increase in crashes involving Fire & EMS vehicles to warrant the change, in fact the number of crashes decreased from 33 in 2013 to 25 in 2014. Furthermore for the Department of Public Safety/VSP, there would be a substantial cost to retro-fit or change out light bars to the new standard to have uniformity.

**3. What are likely to be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for this Department?**

According to DPS/VSP Fleet Manager David Tift, the following is an estimated cost for the retro-fit or change out of light bars to the new standard;

The following quote is to make one half of the light bar red so they are like Connecticut State Police. Connecticut has the Driver's side red and the Passengers side blue.

Some of our older light bars would cost \$895.32 and would take about two hours to modify them. At a rough guess there are about 125 of these. Total is \$111,915.00 to outfit them.

Some of the newer bars would be slightly cheaper at \$867.78 each. At a rough guess there are about 75 of these. Total would be \$65,083.50

The unmarked or low profile vehicles all have some form of forward facing interior light and some of those are upgradable. There are about 25 of the upgradable ones at \$55.08 each for a total of \$1,377.00

Please return this bill review as a Microsoft Word or PDF document to [laura.gray@state.vt.us](mailto:laura.gray@state.vt.us) and [Jessica.mishaan@state.vt.us](mailto:Jessica.mishaan@state.vt.us)

Total - \$178,375.00

The forward facing lights in most of the BCI cars are not upgradeable, roughly 100, new interior lights would cost \$316.98 for a total of \$31,698.00

The rear facing lights in the HQ/Admin/BCI cars are not upgradeable, roughly 100 red lights at \$82.08 each for a total of \$8,208.00

In the low profile or unmarked cruisers with a light stick in the rear, the cost to upgrade would be roughly \$400.00 each and we have roughly 30 of those for a total of \$12,000.

Total Cost - **\$230,281.00**

**4. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for other departments in state government, and what is likely to be their perspective on it?**

The VT DMV, who issues permits, would incur a cost to change forms and their computer tracking program.

**5. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for others, and what is likely to be their perspective on it? (for example, public, municipalities, organizations, business, regulated entities, etc)**

The members of the public will experience a period of time in which they will need to become familiar with the new light options on Police, Fire and EMS vehicles. Municipalities, depending on size(s) would also face cost(s) associated with upgrading/changing out lights on vehicles.

**6. Other Stakeholders:**

**6.1 Who else is likely to support the proposal and why?**

Members of Fire Departments, EMS Agencies as well as members of Police Departments. The support/opposition of this bill is going to vary and depend upon the opinion/personal preference of the individuals responsible for the respective agencies affected by this bill. These opinions are going to vary.

**6.2 Who else is likely to oppose the proposal and why?**

Members of Fire Departments, EMS Agencies as well as members of Police Departments. The support/opposition of this bill is going to vary and depend upon the opinion/personal preference of the individuals responsible for the respective agencies affected by this bill. These opinions are going to vary.

**7. Rationale for recommendation:** *Justify recommendation stated above.*

The rationale for not supporting this bill is as follows,

1. Cost – For the Department of Public Safety/VSP it will be costly to upgrade/retro-fit light(s) to the new standard, making the department cruisers uniform. The total cost for the project will be approximately \$230,281.00.
2. In reviewing the proposed bill, there is no requirement mandating or making this the new standard across Vermont, rather saying the change(s) may be authorized. **Therefore there is going to be a lack of consistency across the state which could lead to issues.** The bill states the light change may be authorized a vehicle owned/leased by a fire department. However when it addresses EMS vehicles, this condition is not present.
3. Data doesn't show an increase in crashes involving Fire and EMS vehicles. In fact there has been a decline from 33 in 2013 to 25 in 2014. (Per VTrans)

**8. Specific modifications that would be needed to recommend support of this bill:** *Not meant to rewrite bill, but rather, an opportunity to identify simple modifications that would change recommended position.*

None

**9. Gubernatorial appointments to board or commission?**

**Secretary/Commissioner has reviewed this document**



**Date: 3/12/15**