

SUBJECT: Surrender of a suspended or revoked driver's license

COMMITTEE: Public Safety — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 7 ayes — B. Turner, Keel, Berman, Carter, Driver, P. King, Najera
0 nays
2 absent — Gutierrez, Hupp

WITNESSES: For — None
Against — None
On — Joyce Stephens, Department of Public Safety

BACKGROUND: Current law requires a person whose driver's license is suspended or revoked to return that license to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) or surrender it to the court that hands down a conviction requiring automatic suspension.

DIGEST: CSHB 2032 would make it permissive, rather than mandatory, for DPS to require the holder of a suspended or revoked license to surrender the license to the agency. It would allow, rather than require, DPS to return a suspended license to the holder when the suspension period expires. Similarly, the bill would make it permissive, rather than mandatory, for a court in which a person is convicted of an offense requiring automatic suspension to require the person to surrender the license to the court.

The bill would remove the requirement for the person to send the driver's license and vehicle registration to DPS and instead would authorize DPS to implement rules requiring this.

This bill would take effect on September 1, 1999.

SUPPORTERS SAY: Requiring all revoked or suspended licenses to be returned to DPS places an administrative burden on the agency. All returned licenses must be processed, stored, and recorded in the DPS database at a cost to the agency.

Because driver's licenses double as identification cards, it would benefit citizens to keep their licenses even if they could not use them to drive legally. If a trooper stops a driver with a suspended license, the trooper knows by checking the license plates or driver's license that a license is suspended, even if the person still uses it as identification.

Current law requires DPS to return licenses at the end of the suspension period. Often, a person's license has expired by the time a suspension period ends. Therefore, DPS should be able to determine whether it is necessary to return the license to the person.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition.