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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 163 (as introduced 2-15-17)
Sponsor: Senator Patrick J. Colbeck
Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 3-22-17

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to do the following:

-- **Require the Secretary of State (SOS) to develop and issue a fund-raising license plate recognizing the Choose Life Michigan Fund.**
-- **Create the "Choose Life Fund" and require donations for the plates to be deposited into the Fund.**
-- **Require the money in the proposed Fund to be disbursed to the Choose Life Michigan Fund for distribution to nonprofit organizations that promote life-affirming choices.**

Specifically, the bill would require the SOS, within 180 days after the bill's effective date, to develop under Section 811e and issue under Section 811f a fund-raising plate recognizing the Choose Life Michigan Fund. The SOS would have to design the plate in conjunction with the board of the Choose Life Michigan Fund.

(Section 811e prescribes a start-up fee for any new fund-raising plate in an amount equal to a three-year average of the cost to the SOS of developing a new plate, as calculated by the SOS on January 1 of each year, and requires the fee to be deposited in the Transportation Administration Collection Fund to be used for the cost of creating, producing, and issuing fund-raising plates. Section 811f authorizes the SOS to issue a fund-raising plate instead of a standard registration plate upon application, which must be accompanied by a $25 fund-raising donation, payment of the regular vehicle registration tax prescribed in the Code, and a $10 service fee.)

The bill would create the Choose Life Fund within the State Treasury. The State Treasurer could receive money or other assets from any source for deposit into the Fund. The State Treasurer would have to direct the investment of the Fund, and credit to it any interest and earnings from the investments. Money in the Fund at the close of the fiscal year would remain in the Fund and would not lapse to the General Fund.

The SOS would have to transfer the donation money from the sale of the fund-raising plates to the State Treasurer, who would have to credit the money to the proposed Choose Life Fund. On an annual basis, the State Treasurer would have to disburse money in the proposed Fund to the Choose Life Michigan Fund. The State Treasurer would be the administrator of the proposed Fund for auditing purposes.

Money disbursed to the Choose Life Michigan Fund would have to be distributed to eligible nonprofit organizations that are exempt from taxation under the Internal Revenue Code, to be spent on projects that promote life-affirming choices.

"Eligible nonprofit organizations" would include crisis pregnancy centers, homes for pregnant women, and other organizations that provide practical support to pregnant women, provide outreach to at-risk populations, and promote life-affirming programs and projects.

"Life-affirming programs and projects" would include media campaigns; specialty outreach to at-risk populations, including minorities, teenagers, and college-aged women; campaigns to promote adoption; and suicide prevention.

The bill would take effect 90 days after it was enacted.

Proposed MCL 257.811aa   Legislative Analyst: Drew Krogulecki

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would create a start-up cost to the Department of State; however, the current estimated three-year average start-up fee of $15,000 would have to be paid to the Department of State from the Choose Life Fund proposed by the bill. The revenue generated from the fund-raising license plate would be deposited into the Fund, after which the State Treasurer would disburse payments from the Fund on a yearly basis to the Choose Life Michigan Fund.

The bill would have no fiscal impact on local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Joe Carrasco