

license plates with the county name printed on the license plate, also issue license plates with the words “Sunshine State” printed on the license plate subject to the approval of DHSMV and a legislative appropriation for the additional license plates. Florida automobile owners have an array of choices that include over 100 specialty license plates which require an additional fee and several “special” plates priced the same as standard plates.¹

“In God We Trust” was included in the state seal and flag of Florida adopted in 1886, and was adopted as the official state motto in the 2006 Florida Legislative Session.² In 1956, “In God We Trust” was established as the United States national motto. Additionally, “In God We Trust” has been printed on U.S. currency since the Civil War and has been mandated on all coin and paper currency since 1957.³

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill allows county tax collectors to, in addition to issuing license plates with the county name printed on the license plate, also issue license plates with the state motto (“In God we Trust”), or the words “Sunshine State.” A county may, upon majority vote of the county commission, elect to have the county name removed from the license plates sold in that county. In counties opting to remove the county name, this bill would allow drivers the choice of having the official state motto at the bottom of their license plate rather than the state nickname (“Sunshine State”). This optional plate would be a standard plate, not a specialty plate. Drivers would not be required to pay any additional fees, and standard license plate fees would apply.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

¹ <http://www.flhsmv.gov/html/titlinf.html>

² s. 15.0301, F.S.

³ U.S. Mint Website- www.moneyfactory.gov

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

An additional license plate type will increase initial inventory stocking cost. An estimated supply of 100 plates would be needed at each of the 320 Tax Collector/Tag Office locations. With license plates costing \$1.67 each, DHSMV anticipates the estimated cost to be \$53,440. Although there would be an initial stocking cost for the new plates with the "In God We Trust" graphic, there should also be a corresponding decrease in the sale of current license plates to eventually negate the cost of the new plates. According to DHSMV, this bill will require 300 hours of programming at a cost of \$100 per hour. This \$30,000 contracted cost for programming would be the only permanent fiscal impact.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

The intent of the legislation is to allow drivers a third option of the state motto ("In God We Trust") appearing on their standard license plates; however, as currently written, the bill appears to only allow counties where the county name has been removed from license plates to offer drivers the choice of having the official state motto at the bottom of their license plate. According to DHSMV, there are only two counties, Bay and Miami-Dade, which have removed their county name. The DHSMV recommends removing the sentence stating, "in counties opting to remove the county name, license plates that have the state motto printed on the bottom and license plates that have the words 'Sunshine State' printed on the bottom shall both be offered for issuance" to clarify the statutory language and match the intent of the bill.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Transportation on March 18, 2008:

As originally written, the bill excluded counties (Miami-Dade and Bay) which have previously removed their county name from the license plate. The CS reorganizes the current statutory language and the intent of the CS is to allow the state motto license plate to be available in all 67 Florida counties; however, as currently written, the bill appears to only allow counties where the county name has been removed from license plates to offer drivers the choice of having the official state motto at the bottom of their license plate.

B. Amendments:**Barcode #097024 by the Community Affairs Committee on April 17, 2008:**

The "delete everything" amendment corrects the technical deficiency discussed above by clarifying that all counties who have not elected to remove the county name from the

license plate may issue license plates with either the name of the county in which the plate is sold, the state motto, or the words "Sunshine State" imprinted on the plate. Counties which have elected to remove the county name from the plate may issue plates with either the state motto, or the words "Sunshine State" imprinted at the bottom. (WITH TITLE AMENDMENT)

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
