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AB-2949 Vehicles: toll exemptions. (2021-2022)

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Assembly Bill No. 2949

CHAPTER 871

An act to amend Section 23301 of, and to add Section 23301.3 to, the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

[Approved by Governor September 30, 2022. Filed with Secretary of State September 30, 2022.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2949, Lee. Vehicles: toll exemptions.

Under existing law, a person who enters a vehicular crossing becomes liable for any tolls imposed. Existing law prescribes the means by which a toll may be collected or paid, including by the use of an electronic transponder or by means of capturing a license plate number and billing the registered owner. Existing law prohibits a person from evading, or attempting to evade, the payment of tolls on any vehicular crossing or toll highway. A violation of this prohibition is subject to civil penalties, but it is not a crime.

This bill would exempt a vehicle that is registered to a veteran, displaying a specialized veteran license plate, as specified, and registered to a transponder or other electronic toll payment device from payment of a toll or related fines on a toll road, toll bridge, toll highway, vehicular crossing, or any other toll facility, except a high-occupancy toll lane. The bill would also make conforming changes.

Because this bill would create a new duty by requiring locally owned and operated toll facilities to recognize and exempt eligible vehicles, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 23301 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

23301. Except as provided in Sections 23301.3 and 23301.5, a vehicle that enters into or upon a vehicular crossing is liable for those tolls and other charges prescribed by the California Transportation Commission.

SEC. 2. Section 23301.3 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

23301.3. (a) A vehicle described in subdivision (b) is exempt from a toll or other charge on a toll road, toll bridge, toll highway, vehicular crossing, or other toll facility.

(b) The exemption described in subdivision (a) applies only to a vehicle that meets all of the following criteria:

(1) The vehicle is registered to a veteran.

(2) The vehicle is displaying one of the following license plates:

(A) A license plate issued to a disabled veteran, pursuant to Section 5007.

(B) A license plate issued to a Pearl Harbor survivor, pursuant to Section 5101.3.

(C) A license plate issued to a recipient of the Army Medal of Honor, Navy Medal of Honor, Air Force Medal of Honor, Army Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross, pursuant to Section 5101.4.

(D) A license plate issued to a former American prisoner of war, pursuant to Section 5101.5.

(E) A license plate issued to a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, pursuant to Section 5101.6.

(F) A license plate issued to a recipient of the Purple Heart, pursuant to Section 5101.8.

(3) The vehicle is registered to a transponder or other electronic toll payment device account with an issuing agency as defined in Section 40250.

(c) This section does not exempt a vehicle described in subdivision (b) from a toll on a high-occupancy toll (HOT) lane.

(d) Sections 23302 and 23302.5 do not apply to a vehicle exempt pursuant to this section.

SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.