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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to disabled parking permits; amending
3 s. 318.18, F.S.; providing for a parking enforcement
4 specialist or agency to validate compliance for the
5 disposition of a citation issued for illegally parking
6 in a space provided for people who have disabilities;
7 amending s. 320.0848, F.S.; revising requirements for
8 renewal or replacement of a disabled parking permit;
9 prohibiting applying for a new disabled parking permit
10 for a certain period of time upon a second finding of
11 guilt or plea of nolo contendere to unlawful use of
12 such permit; requiring the Department of Highway
13 Safety and Motor Vehicles to audit disabled parking
14 permit holders, verify certain information, and
15 invalidate the permit of a deceased permitholder;
16 directing the department to implement a means for
17 reporting abuse of disabled parking permits; providing
18 for the department to conduct a public awareness
19 campaign; providing an effective date.

20
21 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

22
23 Section 1. Subsection (6) of section 318.18, Florida
24 Statutes, is amended to read:

25 318.18 Amount of penalties.—The penalties required for a
26 noncriminal disposition pursuant to s. 318.14 or a criminal
27 offense listed in s. 318.17 are as follows:

28 (6) One hundred dollars or the fine amount designated by

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29 | county ordinance, plus court costs for illegally parking, under
30 | s. 316.1955, in a parking space provided for people who have
31 | disabilities. However, this fine will be waived if a person
32 | provides to the law enforcement agency or parking enforcement
33 | specialist or agency that issued the citation for such a
34 | violation proof that the person committing the violation has a
35 | valid parking permit or license plate issued pursuant to s.
36 | 316.1958, s. 320.0842, s. 320.0843, s. 320.0845, or s. 320.0848
37 | or a signed affidavit that the owner of the disabled parking
38 | permit or license plate was present at the time the violation
39 | occurred, and that such a parking permit or license plate was
40 | valid at the time the violation occurred. The law enforcement
41 | officer or agency or the parking enforcement specialist or
42 | agency, upon determining that all required documentation has
43 | been submitted verifying that the required parking permit or
44 | license plate was valid at the time of the violation, must sign
45 | an affidavit of compliance. Upon provision of the affidavit of
46 | compliance and payment of a dismissal fee of up to \$7.50 to the
47 | clerk of the circuit court, the clerk shall dismiss the
48 | citation.

49 | Section 2. Paragraph (d) of subsection (1), paragraph (e)
50 | of subsection (2), and subsection (8) of section 320.0848,
51 | Florida Statutes, are amended, subsections (9) and (10) are
52 | renumbered as subsections (11) and (12), respectively, and new
53 | subsections (9) and (10) are added to that section, to read:

54 | 320.0848 Persons who have disabilities; issuance of
55 | disabled parking permits; temporary permits; permits for certain
56 | providers of transportation services to persons who have

57 disabilities.—

58 (1)

59 (d) Beginning October 1, 2012 ~~April 1, 1999~~, the
 60 department ~~of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles~~ shall renew the
 61 disabled parking permit of any person certified as permanently
 62 disabled on the application if the person applies for renewal in
 63 person and provides a current certificate of disability pursuant
 64 to this subsection.

65 (2) DISABLED PARKING PERMIT; PERSONS WITH LONG-TERM
 66 MOBILITY PROBLEMS.—

67 (e) To obtain a replacement for a disabled parking permit
 68 that has been lost or stolen, a person must appear in person,
 69 submit an application on a form prescribed by the department,
 70 and ~~must~~ pay a replacement fee in the amount of \$1.00, to be
 71 retained by the issuing agency. If the person submits with the
 72 application a police report documenting that the permit was
 73 stolen, there is no replacement fee.

74 (8) A law enforcement officer or a parking enforcement
 75 specialist may confiscate the disabled parking permit from any
 76 person who fraudulently obtains or unlawfully uses such a
 77 permit. A law enforcement officer or a parking enforcement
 78 specialist may confiscate any disabled parking permit that is
 79 expired, reported as lost or stolen, or defaced, or that does
 80 not display a personal identification number.

81 (a) ~~Beginning April 1, 1999,~~ The permit number of each
 82 confiscated permit must be submitted to the department ~~of~~
 83 ~~Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles,~~ and the fact that the permit
 84 has been confiscated must be noted on the permitholder's record.

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85 If two permits issued to the same person have been confiscated,
86 the department ~~of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles~~ shall refer
87 the information to the central abuse hotline of the Department
88 of Children and Family Services for an investigation of
89 potential abuse, neglect, or exploitation of the permit owner.

90 (b) A confiscated permit must be held as evidence until a
91 judicial decision about the violation has been made. After a
92 finding of guilt has been made or a plea of nolo contendere has
93 been entered, the charging agency shall destroy the confiscated
94 permit. A confiscated permit may not, under any circumstances,
95 be returned to its registered owner after a finding of guilt has
96 been made or a plea of nolo contendere has been entered in
97 court. If a finding of guilt has been made or a plea of nolo
98 contendere has been entered for fraudulent or other unlawful use
99 of a disabled parking permit after a prior finding of guilt or
100 plea of nolo contendere for fraudulent or other unlawful use of
101 a disabled parking permit issued to the same registered permit
102 owner, the permit owner may not apply for a new disabled parking
103 permit for a period of 4 years. The permit number of each
104 destroyed permit must be reported to the department, and the
105 department must record in the real-time disabled parking permit
106 database that the permit has been invalidated.

107 (9) (a) At least once every 6 months, the department shall
108 randomly audit disabled parking permit holders to ensure that
109 all required criteria for the ownership and possession of such
110 permit are still valid. As a component of the audit, the
111 department shall, at a minimum:

112 1. Review death records maintained by the Department of

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113 Health to ensure that the permit holder has not died.

114 2. Review the number of times the permit has been
115 confiscated for fraudulent or unlawful use, if at all.

116 3. Determine if the permit has ever been reported lost or
117 stolen and, if so, determine the current status of the permit.

118 (b) At least annually, the department shall verify that
119 the owner of each disabled parking permit has not died. Such
120 verification shall include, but is not limited to, consultation
121 with death records maintained by the Department of Health. If a
122 disabled parking permit owner is found to be deceased, the
123 department shall promptly invalidate the decedent's disabled
124 parking permit.

125 (10) The department shall develop and implement a means by
126 which persons can report abuse of disabled parking permits by
127 telephone hotline or by submitting a form online or by mail.

128 Section 3. (1) The Department of Highway Safety and Motor
129 Vehicles shall make a public announcement and conduct a public
130 awareness campaign regarding the abuses of disabled parking
131 permits and the burdens such abuses inflict on disabled persons
132 throughout the state. The public awareness campaign shall also
133 inform the public about:

134 (a) The requirement to appear in person to renew an
135 expired disabled parking permit or replace a lost or stolen
136 disabled parking permit.

137 (b) The implementation of the new periodic disabled
138 parking permit audit system.

139 (c) The implementation of the new complaint process for
140 reporting abuses of disabled parking permits.

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141 (2) The public awareness campaign shall commence within 30
142 days after the effective date of this act and shall continue for
143 not less than 6 months.

144 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.