

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Eighty-first Session
April 9, 2021**

The Senate Committee on Growth and Infrastructure was called to order by Chair Dallas Harris at 6:07 p.m. on Friday, April 9, 2021, Online. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Dallas Harris, Chair
Senator Chris Brooks, Vice Chair
Senator Pat Spearman
Senator Scott Hammond

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Keith F. Pickard (Excused)

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Scholley, Policy Analyst
Eileen O'Grady, Counsel
Paula Peters, Committee Secretary

CHAIR HARRIS:

We will open the work session on Senate Bill (S.B.) 163.

SENATE BILL 163: Provides for the issuance of special license plates to support the Divine Nine organizations. (BDR 43-1018)

SUSAN SCHOLLEY (Policy Analyst):

I will present my work session document ([Exhibit B](#)) on S.B. 163.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

This bill is different than anything I have experienced on license plates. I thought you were asking for one license plate, instead it is nine celebrating the nine distinct sororities and fraternities. I think that is problematic. Why did we not just create one plate design that celebrates all of the sororities and fraternities?

To actually limit this to only those people who went to those universities, they will never make a lot of money. I would like to see them make more money by people buying the plate to celebrate and try to help out, so the money goes to a scholarship.

CHAIR HARRIS:

The legislation before you does allow the public to request one of these license plates and does not limit it to membership.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

There are people all over the world who are members of the Divine Nine. It is not just about those going to the schools. The Divine Nine was accepted at historically black colleges and universities, but this does not limit purchases to just those individuals.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

I heard in testimony that anybody wanting to buy one of the license plates had to have a card showing he or she had attended the university before purchasing one of these license plates. If that is not true, it is great to have the purchasing open to everyone.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

It is not that you need a card showing you go or went to the school; you would have to have a membership card for the sorority or fraternity similar to what you have if you are an Eastern Star or a member of the Masons or some other organization. It is not about the school; it is about the organization.

CHAIR HARRIS:

The bill, as drafted, opens purchasing up to the public.

SENATOR BROOKS:

I will be asking the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for more clarification. I find it difficult to believe there is not a fiscal note associated with printing nine new license plates with low usage. They have 761 hours minimum based on the design and implementation of these license plates, and I want to make sure that is correct, so the DMV actually can absorb the costs.

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SENATOR SPEARMAN:

Purchasing the license plates is open to the public, not limited. The Divine Nine is something to be proud of, so I would not say it will be limited. It was never about a school and is available to everyone, just like the other license plates.

CHAIR HARRIS:

I will accept a motion to do pass S.B. 163.

SENATOR SPEARMAN MOVED TO DO PASS S.B. 163.

SENATOR BROOKS SECONDED THE MOTION.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

I agree the nine license plates are precedented. There is no fiscal note. I would like to hear from the DMV that they understand, and if that has changed, they know there are nine license plates instead of one. Today, I will be a no on this but reserve my right to change my vote after getting more information.

SENATOR HARRIS:

I do believe the DMV testified at the hearing that they are aware there are nine different license plates as part of this bill.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATOR HAMMOND VOTED NO.)

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CHAIR HARRIS:

We will close the hearing on S.B. 163. Hearing no further business, we are adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Paula Peters,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Dallas Harris, Chair

DATE: _____

| EXHIBIT SUMMARY | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Bill | Exhibit Letter | Begins on Page | Witness / Entity | Description |
| | A | 1 | | Agenda |
| S.B. 163 | B | 1 | Susan Scholley | Work Session Document |