

**From:** Rep. Mike Prax <Rep.Mike.Prax@akleg.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 9, 2021 11:47 PM  
**To:** House State Affairs <HouseState.Affairs@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** SB 47 Vehicle Registrations - Persons With Disability

Dear State Affairs Committee Members;

SB 47 – “An Act relating to special registration plates for vehicles owned by persons with disabilities” is scheduled to be before the House State Affairs Committee on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Judging from the written testimony posted on BASIS for this bill, it appears to be intended to make it more convenient for patients availing themselves of the services offered by speech-language pathologist, physical therapists, or occupational therapists to access the respective businesses. That is a noble goal, but HB 47 won't necessarily improve the situation for the people it is intended to help and might exacerbate handicapped parking problems in general.

1. Passing SB 47 as written will result in more people being able to utilize 'handicapped' parking spaces but it won't make more parking spaces available nor will it change the location of the handicapped reserved spaces in a given parking lot.
2. The 'professional offices that this bill appears to be designed to serve are often located in strip malls or 'business centers'. The handicapped parking spaces are not necessarily conveniently located for accessing these businesses. The bill won't provide a practical benefit in many situations.
3. The permit is issued to the vehicle – not the person. I noticed a significant amount of abuse of the privilege over the years I was involved in retail businesses, because the person who happens to be driving the vehicle is not necessarily the person for whom the permit is issued and because the condition that justified issuing the permit was resolved before the permit expired. The result is that a significant number of people who did not have a disabling condition drive vehicles that have a 'handicapped parking permit' which they park in 'handicapped parking' spaces and the spaces are often not available to others who are legitimately entitled to use those reserved spaces.
4. It is practically impossible to enforce the handicapped parking rule.

The Committee should at least ask local planning authorities to review the bill to see whether what is intended will be accomplished. It should also contact a few people operate strip malls and business centers to see whether the bill can have its intended effect.

Thank you for your consideration.

Representative Mike Prax