

Assembly Bill No. 178

CHAPTER 131

An act to amend Section 101.7 of the Streets and Highways Code, relating to highways.

[Approved by Governor August 26, 2013. Filed with Secretary of State August 26, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 178, Beth Gaines. Highways: exit information signs.

Existing law requires the Department of Transportation to adopt rules and regulations that allow the placement, near exits on freeways in rural areas, of information signs identifying specific roadside businesses. Existing law prohibits the department from approving the placement of any sign within any urban area with a population of 5,000 or more.

This bill would require the department, until January 1, 2020, to allow the placement of information signs along State Highway Route 65 within, or at exits leading to, the City of Lincoln. The bill would also require the department to report, by January 1, 2021, to the transportation committees of the Senate and Assembly on the implementation of this provision and on its recommendations as to whether the period of this authorization should be extended, and whether the authorization should be expanded to other urban areas.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 101.7 of the Streets and Highways Code is amended to read:

101.7. (a) The department shall adopt rules and regulations that allow the placement, near exits on freeways located in rural areas, of information signs identifying specific roadside businesses offering fuel, food, lodging, camping services, approved 24-hour pharmacy services, or approved attractions, and that prescribe the standards for those signs.

(b) The department shall provide equal access to all business applicants.

(c) (1) (A) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the department shall not approve the placement of a sign within an urban area designated by the United States Bureau of the Census as having a population of 5,000 or more.

(B) The department may not remove an information sign that was placed before January 1, 2003, due solely to population growth in an urban area that results in a population of 5,000 or more but less than 10,000.

(2) (A) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the department, until January 1, 2021, shall allow the placement of information signs along State Highway Route 65 within, or at exits leading to, the City of Lincoln.

(B) On or before January 1, 2020, the department shall report to the transportation committees of the Senate and Assembly on the implementation of this paragraph. The report shall describe the implementation and any benefits of, or concerns regarding, that implementation, and shall include recommendations as to whether or not the period of this program should be extended and whether or not the authorization for information signs under this section should be expanded to urban areas having a population of 5,000 or more.

(d) The information signs authorized in this section may be placed near the freeway exits in addition to, or in lieu of, other highway signs of the department, but not in lieu of on-premises or off-premises highway oriented business signs and directional signs.

(e) The department shall establish and charge a fee to place and maintain information signs in an amount not less than 25 percent above its estimated cost in placing and maintaining the information signs. The department shall annually review the amount of that fee and revise it as necessary. Funds derived from the imposition of the fee, after deduction of the cost to the department for the placement and maintenance of the information signs, shall be available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, for safety roadside rest purposes.

(f) The department shall incorporate the use of an “RV-friendly” symbol on an information sign placed pursuant to this section for a specific roadside business that meets criteria of the department regarding sufficiency for recreational vehicles with respect to the parking spaces and surfaces, vertical clearance, turning radius, and entrances and exits of the facility. A specific roadside business otherwise qualified for a sign pursuant to this section may qualify for and request an “RV-friendly” symbol for that sign. The department shall adopt rules and regulations for an “RV-friendly” symbol consistent with this section as well as the Federal Highway Administration’s Interim Approval for Addition of RV-friendly Symbol to Specific Service Signs. The rules and regulations adopted by the department shall include a provision for the roadside business to acknowledge that overnight occupancy is not permitted unless the roadside business is licensed as a special occupancy park as defined in Section 18862.43 of the Health and Safety Code. The department shall establish and charge an additional fee pursuant to subdivision (e) to place and maintain the symbol.

(g) The department shall develop rules and regulations governing signs for approved attractions, which shall include amusement parks, botanical and zoological facilities, business districts and main street communities, education centers, golf courses, historical sites, museums, religious sites, resorts, ski areas, marinas, “u-pick” farms and orchards, farmers’ markets, and wineries, viticulture areas, and vineyards.