

HOUSE BILL 284

By Halford

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 55, Chapter 20, Part 3, relative to the yellow dot program.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Yellow DOT Program was established in 2012 and designed to provide first responders with an individual's medical information in the event of an emergency on Tennessee's roadways; and

WHEREAS, the information can mean the difference between life and death in the "golden hour" immediately following a serious incident; and

WHEREAS, while the Yellow DOT Program has primarily focused on Tennessee's senior citizens, certain military veterans may also benefit from the program, including those with service-connected disabilities such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and

WHEREAS, certain medical information can potentially have a great impact on an encounter between a law enforcement officer and a motorist during a traffic stop; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-20-301, is amended by deleting the following language:

The purpose of the yellow dot program is to assist drivers and passengers who participate in the program and emergency medical responders in reporting critical medical information in the event of a motor vehicle accident or a medical emergency involving a participant's vehicle.

and substituting instead the following:

The purpose of the yellow dot program is to assist:

- (1) Drivers and passengers who participate in the program;
- (2) Emergency medical responders in reporting critical medical information in the event of a motor vehicle accident or a medical emergency involving a participant's vehicle; and
- (3) Law enforcement officers in becoming aware of a motorist's or passenger's critical medical information that may impact the officer's encounter with the motorist or passenger during a traffic stop or welfare check.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-20-304, is amended by deleting the section and substituting instead the following:

The department of transportation and the governor's highway safety office shall take reasonable measures to publicize the yellow dot program to potential participants, law enforcement officers, and emergency medical responders. In publicizing the yellow dot program, the department may cooperate with local law enforcement agencies, fire departments, emergency medical services agencies, the department of veterans services, human resources agencies, statewide development districts with direct contact with senior citizen centers in such districts, and other governmental agencies, especially agencies which assist persons who are fifty-five (55) years of age or older or agencies providing services to veterans. The department may also cooperate with and seek the assistance of interested nonprofit organizations, including, but not limited to, AARP, American Automobile Association, Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Tennessee Coalition for the Enhancement of Senior Drivers. The department, in consultation with the governor's highway safety office, shall also develop training materials or handouts on the yellow dot program that may be furnished to the Tennessee highway patrol and local law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and emergency medical services agencies.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-20-308, is amended by adding the following as a new subsection:

If a law enforcement officer stops a motor vehicle with a yellow dot decal affixed to the vehicle and if during the encounter with the driver or passenger of the motor vehicle the officer reasonably believes the driver or passenger has a medical condition that is impacting the officer's encounter with the driver or passenger, the law enforcement officer, upon receiving consent from the driver or passenger, is authorized to review any yellow dot folder or folders present in the vehicle.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.