

Date of Hearing: April 7, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Lori D. Wilson, Chair

AB 1149 (Davies) – As Amended April 1, 2025

SUBJECT: Driver's licenses

SUMMARY: Exempts a person who possesses a digital driver's license under the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMVs) mobile Driver's License (mDL) pilot program from the prohibition that a person may not have more than one driver's license in their possession until July 1, 2026 when the pilot ends.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the mDL pilot program until June 30, 2026 and permits up to 5% of license holders to have an mDL during the course of the pilot program. (Vehicle Code Section (VEH) 13020)
- 2) Provides that a participant in the mDL program shall not be required to use an mDL rather than a physical driver's license for the purpose of identity verification, nor shall their participation in the pilot program preclude their use of a physical driver's license under any circumstances.
- 3) Prohibits the possession of more than one driver's license. (VEH 12511)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: AB 149 (Budget) Chapter 81, Statutes of 2021 established mDL pilot program under the DMV. The mDL pilot program allows residents to store their driver's license or state ID digitally on their smartphones using the CA DMV Wallet app, Apple Wallet, or Google Wallet. SB 125 (Budget), Chapter 54, Statutes of 2023 expanded the cap on mDL pilot program participants from 0.5% to 5% of licensed drivers.

The pilot allows 1.5 million participants to register for a digital driver's license. The mDL offers a quick and secure way to check-in at airports including Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, and Sacramento International Airports, with more airports to be added soon. The mDL's TruAge capabilities allows users to buy age-restricted products, such as alcohol, from participating retailers in Sacramento. In addition, the mDL also allows individuals to withhold personal information, such as their address, to protect consumers from sharing potentially sensitive information.

California is one of 15 states that offer digital licenses that can be accepted by Transportation Security Administration (TSA) agents at airport security checkpoints.

According to the TSA, "Digital IDs such as mDLs are more secure than physical credentials, which can be counterfeit or fraudulent. Digital IDs are also more private because you only share the information TSA needs to verify your identity - nothing more. The acceptance of digital IDs has the potential to modernize checkpoint screening procedures and technologies to better serve

the aviation security ecosystem, reduce points of contact for passengers, and pave the way for a more seamless travel experience.”

The DMV Wallet version of the mDL also serves as a convenient way for individuals to log in to DMV online services to complete transactions such as renewing a driver’s license or applying for Disabled Person Placards. In addition, the mDL Reader can be used to verify another mDL holder’s identity.

According to the author, “California’s mobile driver’s license (mDL) pilot program provides a convenient and voluntary option for Californians to verify their identity. An mDL can be stored on a person’s phone and used at TSA airport security checks and convenience stores. More than 1 million Californians have signed up for the pilot program. Unfortunately, program participants risk violating the Vehicle Code’s prohibition on possessing more than one driver’s license. Individuals cited for this infraction who remain enrolled in the program could face a \$234 ticket. This may discourage program participation. AB 1149 will exempt the mDL pilot program from this Vehicle Code infraction.”

Prior legislation: SB 125 (Budget), Chapter 54, Statutes of 2023 expanded the cap on mDL pilot program participants from 0.5% to 5% of licensed drivers.

AB 149 (Budget) Chapter 81, Statutes of 2021 established the mDL pilot program.

SB 2594 (Deddeh) Chapter 159, Statutes of 1988 prevents a person from possessing more than one driver’s license.

AB 1503 (Santiago) of 2021 would have established an mDL pilot program. This bill died in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 1255 (Dababneh) of 2017 would have established an mDL pilot program. This bill died in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 221 (Dababneh) of 2015 would have established an mDL pilot program. This bill was vetoed by the Governor.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

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