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**HOUSE BILL NO. 517**

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 13, 2026

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 46.2-203.3 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Department of Motor Vehicles; driver communication improvement program.*

Patron—Martinez

Committee Referral Pending

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 46.2-203.3 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 46.2-203.3. Driver communication improvement program.**

The Department shall develop and implement a program for the promotion, printing, and distribution of envelopes for use by drivers ~~diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder~~ *with a disability that can impair communication*, as that term is defined in § ~~38.2-3418.17~~ *46.2-600.1*, to provide to a law-enforcement officer for the purpose of easing communication during a traffic stop or upon such law-enforcement officer's arrival at the scene of a traffic accident. Such envelope ~~may~~ *shall* (i) clearly state that the driver ~~has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder~~ *may have a disability that can impair communication* and have printed directions for law-enforcement officers on best practices for interacting with such driver; (ii) provide space for more information to be written about the driver's communication needs; (iii) be of a sufficient size to fit a vehicle registration card, vehicle insurance card, and emergency contact information; and (iv) have printed directions instructing the driver to place his proof of vehicle registration and insurance in the envelope and provide such envelope and his driver's license to law enforcement if he is ever involved in a traffic stop or traffic accident.

The Department shall *make such envelopes available upon request. No person shall be required to identify or provide proof of a disability to receive such envelope. The Department shall not collect or store information identifying any person who has requested or received such envelope, except any information necessary to distribute such envelope to the requestor. No such information shall be stored in any form after the distribution of such envelope is complete.*

*The Department shall notify any vehicle owner who has indicated that he has a disability that can impair communication pursuant to § 46.2-600.1 and any driver with a driver's license indicator authorized pursuant to subsection K of § 46.2-342 of the program established pursuant to this section and provide instructions for requesting such envelopes.*

Nothing herein shall require the Department to verify any information provided on the envelope. No action taken by any person, whether private citizen or public officer or employee, with regard to any information provided on the envelope shall create a warranty of the reliability or accuracy of the document, nor shall it create any liability on the part of the Commonwealth or of any department, office, or agency or of any officer, employee, or agent thereof.

INTRODUCED

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