

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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L.D. 2171
(Filing No. H-568)

STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
112TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 1540, L.D. 2171,
Bill, "AN ACT Relating to a New Registration Plate
Issue."

Amend the bill by striking out all of the emer-
gency preamble.

Further amend the bill by striking out everything
after the enacting clause and inserting in its place
the following:

'Sec. 1. 29 MRSA c. 5, Art. I-A is enacted to
read:

ARTICLE I-A

ISSUE OF REGISTRATION PLATES

§131. Registration plate issues

The Secretary of State shall provide a new gener-
al issue of registration plates every 6 years for all
vehicles required to be registered in this State for
operation on Maine highways. The first new general
issue of registration plates shall commence on July
1, 1987, and successive new general issues of regis-
tration plates shall be issued every 6 years thereaf-
ter.

Each new general issue of registration plates as
required by this section shall be easily distinguish-
able from the preceding general issue.

The following design elements are guidelines to
be followed by the Secretary of State in the produc-
tion of new plates to be issued from July 1987 to De-
cember 1992. A new plate shall have a white back-

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1 ground; identification numbers and letters and the
2 border shall be distinctly navy blue in color with
3 any graphic material appearing in a color distinctly
4 lobster red, featuring an illustration of a lobster.
5 The name of the State "Maine" shall appear centered
6 at the top of the plate and the designation
7 "Vactionland" shall appear centered at the bottom.
8 This guidance is meant to be applied in accordance
9 with the authority held by the Secretary of State in
10 section 110.

11 The Secretary of State shall adopt rules in ac-
12 cordance with Title 5, chapter 375, to implement this
13 article. In these rules, the Secretary of State may
14 include provisions to protect the integrity of the
15 Maine motor vehicle registration plate, to provide
16 for the issue of replacement plates and any other
17 provisions to facilitate the implementation of this
18 article.

19 §132. Fees for new issues of registration plates

20 A fee of \$1 for each registration plate shall be
21 collected by the Secretary of State from the vehicle
22 registrant for new registration plate issues as re-
23 ferred to in section 131. This fee shall be in addi-
24 tion to any other registration fees required by this
25 Title.

26 Sec. 2. 29 MRSA §191, as amended by PL 1983, c.
27 455, §10, is repealed and the following enacted in
28 its place:

29 §191. Reservation of same number

30 1. Plate issue year. The Secretary of State
31 shall reserve until July 1st the same registration
32 number for the succeeding registration year for per-
33 sons who notify the Secretary of State prior to April
34 1st in writing of their desire to retain their regis-
35 tration number. The fee for retention of the same
36 registration number is \$5.

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1 If a person wishes to retain his registration number
2 and does not have a vehicle to register on July 1st,
3 he may hold his registration number for a maximum of
4 2 registration years by depositing with the Secretary
5 of State the sum of \$10 for each year. These fees
6 are not refundable and shall not be applied as part
7 payment of the registration fee.

8 All numbers other than those reserved shall be re-
9 leased and issued in rotation after July 1st, except
10 that a person wishing to select a number out of rota-
11 tion may do so by paying his registration fee and a
12 reserved number fee of \$5.

13 Holders of initial plates shall pay the sum of \$15
14 which shall be credited toward renewal of the initial
15 plates reserved.

16 2. Nonplate issue year. When a person fails to
17 reregister during a nonplate issue year and the reg-
18 istration remains expired for 6 consecutive months,
19 his reservation of the same number may cease and the
20 number becomes available for reissuance or reassign-
21 ment, or both.

22 Sec. 3. Allocation. The following funds are al-
23 located from the Highway Fund to carry out the pur-
24 pose of this Act.

25 1986-87

26 SECRETARY OF STATE,
27 DEPARTMENT OF

28	Division of Motor Vehicles	
29	Personal Services	\$ 114,177
30	All Other	1,509,113
31	Capital Expenditures	9,900
32	Total	<u>\$1,633,190</u>
33	Provides funds in	
34	fiscal year 1986-87	

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1 to purchase materials
2 needed as well as to
3 hire 11 project em-
4 ployees for a
5 16-month period as
6 follows: 7 manufac-
7 turing project em-
8 ployees; 2 laborer
9 project employees;
10 and 2 clerical
11 project employees.

12 FISCAL NOTE

13 This amendment requires the Highway Fund alloca-
14 tions in the following fiscal years:

15	Fiscal Year 1987	\$1,633,190
16	Fiscal Year 1988	\$ 407,700

17 The total Highway Fund allocations over the 2
18 fiscal years will be \$2,040,890.

19 Highway Fund revenues will increase, due to the
20 \$1 per plate fee and the \$5 fee for "reserved" or
21 "out-of-sequence" plates, by approximately
22 \$1,865,000. These revenues will not be collected un-
23 til the fiscal year 1988.'

1

STATEMENT OF FACT

2 During the First Regular Session of the 112th
3 Legislature, the Division of Motor Vehicles requested
4 the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation to al-
5 locate highway funds for a new general issue of reg-
6 istration plates in 1986. The Division of Motor Ve-
7 hicles justified its request by explaining that reg-
8 istration plates were meant to have a useful life of
9 6 years, but current plates are more than 10 years
10 old. As a result of extended exposure to the ele-
11 ments, many plates have deteriorated seriously and
12 there is evidence to show that the battered and faded
13 condition of the plates hampers law enforcement ef-
14 forts.

15 The Joint Standing Committee on Transportation
16 requested authorization to study this problem and to
17 come up with a solution. In the study process, the
18 committee learned 2 important pieces of information
19 which point to necessary action.

20 1. A survey of evasion of motor vehicle regis-
21 tration in Maine undertaken by the Department of
22 Transportation shows an evasion rate of 4.7% which
23 translates into an annual loss of \$500,000 in regis-
24 tration fees to the Highway Fund and an annual loss
25 of \$1,100,000 in excise tax revenues to municipali-
26 ties.

27 2. Registration files at the Division of Motor
28 Vehicles must be purged. Current Division of Motor
29 Vehicles files do not indicate active, valid regis-
30 trations; inactive registrations; or invalid regis-
31 trations. Presently, the Division of Motor Vehicles
32 estimates that over 500,000 invalid registrations ap-
33 pear in their records, but they cannot be readily
34 distinguished.

35 The committee reviewed several proposals and fi-
36 nally directed the Division of Motor Vehicles to pre-
37 pare L.D. 263 which was discussed at length along

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1 with counter proposals from various sources, includ-
2 ing the Secretary of State. Uncertainty about the
3 best way to finance the reissue prompted the Joint
4 Standing Committee on Transportation to hold the bill
5 over to this Second Regular Session of the 112th Leg-
6 islature for further consideration.

7 This amendment calls for general issue registra-
8 tion plates every 6 years and the first new general
9 issue will begin on July 1, 1987.

10 Section 1 establishes the date for a new plate
11 issue and a fee for the new plate, which should gen-
12 erate revenue of approximately \$1,865,000.

13 Section 2 provides for the reservation of plate
14 numbers.

15 Section 3 provides funds to carry out the purpose
16 of this amendment.

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Filed by Rep. Nadeau of Saco
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House

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