

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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1 (EMERGENCY)  
2 (New Draft of H.P. 229, L.D. 263)  
3 SECOND REGULAR SESSION  
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5 ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH LEGISLATURE  
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7 Legislative Document

No. 2172

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9 H.P. 1541 House of Representatives, March 12, 1986  
10 Reported by the Minority from the Committee on Transportation and  
11 printed under Joint Rule 2. Original bill submitted by the Joint Standing  
12 Committee on Transportation as approved by the Legislative Council on April  
25, 1984.

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

13  
14 STATE OF MAINE  
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16 IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
17 NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SIX  
18

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19 AN ACT Relating to a New Registration Plate  
20 Issue.  
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22 Emergency preamble. Whereas, Acts of the Legis-  
23 lature do not become effective until 90 days after  
24 adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

25 Whereas, the last general reissue of new license  
26 plates in Maine occurred in 1974; and

27 Whereas, current license plates when issued more  
28 than a decade ago had a useful life expectancy of 6  
29 years; and

30 Whereas, there is considerable evidence to show  
31 that the battered and faded condition of the plates  
32 hamper law enforcement efforts; and

33 Whereas, the Division of Motor Vehicles needs to  
34 purge its files of inactive or invalid registrations  
35 as soon as possible; and



1           The Secretary of State shall adopt rules in ac-  
2 cordance with Title 5, chapter 375, to implement this  
3 article. In these rules, the Secretary of State may  
4 include provisions to protect the integrity of the  
5 state motor vehicle registration plate, to provide  
6 for the issue of replacement plates and any other  
7 provisions to facilitate the implementation of this  
8 article.

9           §132. Fees for new issues of registration plates

10           A fee of \$1 for each registration plate shall be  
11 collected by the Secretary of State from the vehicle  
12 registrant for new registration plate issues as re-  
13 ferred to in section 131. This fee shall be in addi-  
14 tion to any other registration fees required by this  
15 Title.

16           Sec. 2. 29 MRSa §191, as amended by PL 1983, c.  
17 455, §10, is repealed and the following enacted in  
18 its place:

19           §191. Reservation of same number

20           1. Plate issue year. The Secretary of State  
21 shall reserve until April 1st the same registration  
22 number for the succeeding registration year for per-  
23 sons who shall notify the Secretary of State prior  
24 to January 1st in writing of their desire to retain  
25 their registration number. The fee for retention of  
26 the same registration number is \$5.

27           If a person wishes to retain his registration number  
28 and does not have a vehicle to register on April 1st,  
29 he may hold his registration number for a maximum of  
30 2 registration years by depositing with the Secretary  
31 of State the sum of \$10 for each year. These fees  
32 are not refundable and shall not be applied as part  
33 payment of the registration fee.

34           All numbers other than those reserved shall be re-  
35 leased and issued in rotation after April 1st, except  
36 that a person wishing to select a number out of rota-  
37 tion may do so by paying his registration fee and a  
38 reserved number fee of \$5.

1  Holders of initial plates shall pay the sum of \$15  
2  which shall be credited towards renewal of the ini-  
3  tial plates reserved.

4  2. Nonplate issue year. When a person fails to  
5  reregister during a nonplate issue year and the reg-  
6  istration remains expired for 6 consecutive months,  
7  his reservation of the same number may cease and the  
8  number becomes available for reissuance or reassign-  
9  ment, or both.

10  Sec. 3. Allocation. The following funds are al-  
11  located from the Highway Fund to carry out the pur-  
12  poses of this Act.

13  1985-86 1986-87  
14  SECRETARY OF STATE,  
15  DEPARTMENT OF

16  Division of Motor Vehicles

17	Personal Services		\$156,146
18	All Other	\$795,896	258,339
19	Capital Expenditures		9,900
20	Total	<u>\$795,896</u>	<u>\$424,385</u>

21  Provides funds in fiscal  
22  year 1985-86 to purchase  
23  license plate materials.  
24  Provides funds in fiscal  
25  year 1986-87 to purchase  
26  additional materials  
27  needed, as well as to  
28  hire 11 project employ-  
29  ees for a 16-month peri-  
30  od as follows: 7 manu-  
31  facturing project em-  
32  ployees; 2 laborer  
33  project employees; and 2  
34  clerical project employ-  
35  ees.

36  Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited  
37  in the preamble, this Act shall take effect when ap-  
38  proved.

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FISCAL NOTE

Enactment of this new draft will require Highway Fund allocations in the following fiscal years:

Fiscal Year 1986	\$795,896
Fiscal Year 1987	424,385
Fiscal Year 1988	291,776

The total Highway Fund allocations over the 3 fiscal years will be \$1,512,057.

Highway Fund revenues will increase due to the \$1 per plate fee and the \$5 fee for "reserved" or "out-of-sequence" plates, as follows:

Fiscal Year 1986	\$ 0
Fiscal Year 1987	440,000
Fiscal Year 1988	1,425,000

The total increased revenues to the Highway Fund over the 3 fiscal years will be \$1,865,000.

STATEMENT OF FACT

During the First Regular Session of the 112th Legislature, the Division of Motor Vehicles requested the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation to allocate highway funds for a new general issue of registration plates in 1986. The Division of Motor Vehicles justified its request by explaining that registration plates were meant to have a useful life of 6 years, but current plates were more than 10 years old. As a result of extended exposure to the elements, many plates have deteriorated seriously and there is evidence to show that the battered and faded condition of the plates hampers law enforcement efforts.

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

1. A survey of evasion of motor vehicle regis-

1 tration in Maine undertaken by the Department of  
2 Transportation shows an evasion rate of 4.7% which  
3 translates into an annual loss of \$500,000 in regis-  
4 tration fees to the Highway Fund and an annual loss  
5 of \$1,100,000 in excise tax revenues to municipali-  
6 ties.

7 2. Registration files at the Division of Motor  
8 Vehicles must be purged. Current Division of Motor  
9 Vehicles files do not indicate active, valid regis-  
10 trations; inactive registrations; or invalid regis-  
11 trations. Presently, the Division of Motor Vehicles  
12 estimates that over 500,000 invalid registrations ap-  
13 pear in their records, but they cannot be readily  
14 distinguished.

15 The committee reviewed several proposals and fi-  
16 nally directed the Division of Motor Vehicles to pre-  
17 pare L.D. 263 which was discussed at length along  
18 with counter proposals from various sources, includ-  
19 ing the Secretary of State. Uncertainty about the  
20 best way to finance the reissue prompted the Joint  
21 Standing Committee on Transportation to hold the bill  
22 over to this Second Regular Session of the 112th Leg-  
23 islature for further consideration.

24 This new draft calls for a general issue of reg-  
25 istration plates every 6 years. The first new gener-  
26 al issue will begin on April 1, 1987.

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

30 Section 2 provides for the reservation of plate  
31 numbers.

32 Section 3 provides funds to carry out the purpose  
33 of this new draft.

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