## MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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## 117th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## **SECOND REGULAR SESSION-1996**

Legislative Document

No. 1676

H.P. 1223

House of Representatives, January 9, 1996

An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Registration Improvement Committee.

Submitted by the Department of the Secretary of State pursuant to Joint Rule 24. Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

JOSEPH W. MAYO, Clerk

Presented by Representative O'GARA of Westbrook.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:
Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §101, sub-§61-A is enacted to read:
61-A. Registration agent. "Registration agent" means a nongovernmental entity authorized by the Secretary of State to
conduct registration transactions on the bureau's behalf.
Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA c. 3, sub-c. II, is amended by repealing the subchapter headnote and enacting the following in its place:
SUBCHAPTER II
MUNICIPAL AGENTS, RENEWAL AGENTS AND REGISTRATION AGENTS
Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §204 is enacted to read:
§204. Appointment of registration agents
1. Appointment. The Secretary of State may authorize and appoint registration agents to issue original and renewal
registrations and to transfer registrations from one vehicle to another. The Secretary of State may limit a registration agent's
authority to only renewal registrations or original registrations.
2. Service fees. A registration agent appointed pursuant
to this section may charge and retain service fees not to exceed the service fees authorized in section 201, subsection 3.
3. Training. A registration agent appointed pursuant to this section shall complete any training program the Secretary of
State requires.
4. Duration of appointment. An appointment remains in effect until revoked by the Secretary of State or voluntarily
surrendered. An appointment may be revoked by the Secretary of
State for cause.
5. Rules. The Secretary of State, with the advice and consent of the State Tax Assessor, shall adopt rules governing
the registration agent program. The rules must include
requirements for the electronic transmission of data and funds between registration agents and the bureau and for the
standardized calculation of municipal excise tax. The bureau
shall make provisions for the timely transmission of excise tax
to the appropriate municipalities.

- 2. Content of application. An application for registration must contain the information required by the Secretary of State.

  4 An application must include the registrant's legal name, address and legal residence, the vehicle make and vehicle identification number. Current mileage and fuel type are required for motor vehicles. Gross weight is required for trucks, truck-tractors and special mobile equipment.
  - Sec. 5. 29-A MRSA §401, sub-§6 is enacted to read:

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6. Remote transactions. The Secretary of State may accept applications for registration renewal by computer transmission or other facsimile means as the Secretary of State determines to be appropriate. The Secretary of State may charge a fee per transaction to defray the costs associated with providing remote transactions.

The Secretary of State may enact rules to implement a remote registration transaction program.

- Sec. 6. 29-A MRSA §402, sub-§2, as enacted by PL 1993, c. 683, Pt. A, §2 and affected by Pt. B, §5, is amended to read:
- 2. Method of establishing evidence of insurance. A person insurance by showing the vehicle identification card as defined by section 1551, subsection 4, a letter from an insurance company or agent showing that the vehicle is covered by a liability insurance policy, an insurance binder or an insurance policy that has a summary document that describes the vehicle insured, the name of the insured, amount of insurance, the type of insurance coverage and the period for which the vehicle is covered to either the municipal agent or the bureau. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of State, with the advice of the Superintendent of Insurance, may develop an alternate means of motor vehicle liability insurance verification.

Sec. 7. 29-A MRSA §526 is enacted to read:

## §526. Multiyear fleet registration

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of State may authorize registrants with 100 or more motor vehicle registrations to participate in a multiyear fleet registration program.

Motor vehicles registered pursuant to a multiyear fleet 2 registration program may be issued registration credentials for a period not to exceed 5 years. The Secretary of State shall establish a method for the annual verification and collection of appropriate registration fees and excise taxes. The Secretary of State may adopt rules for the 8 implementation of a multiyear fleet registration program. 10 Sec. 8. 36 MRSA §1482, sub-§1, ¶C, as amended by PL 1993, c. 297, Pt. B, §6 and affected by §7, is further amended to read: 12 C. For the privilege of operating a motor vehicle or camper trailer on the public ways, each motor vehicle, other than a 14 stock race car, or each camper trailer to be so operated is subject to excise tax as follows: a sum equal to 24 mills 16 on each dollar of the maker's list price for the first or 18 current year of model, 17 1/2 mills for the 2nd year, 13 1/2 mills for the 3rd year, 10 mills for the 4th year, 6 1/2 mills for the 5th year and 4 mills for the 6th and 20 succeeding years. The minimum tax is \$5 for a motor vehicle other than a bicycle with motor attached, \$2.50 for a 22 bicycle with motor attached, \$15 for a camper trailer other than a tent trailer and \$5 for a tent trailer. The excise 24 tax on a stock race car is \$5. 26 On new registrations of automobiles, trucks and truck tractors, the excise tax payment must be made 28 prior to registration and is for a one-year period from the date of registration. 30 32 (2) Vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan are subject to an excise determined on a monthly proration basis if their 34 registration period is less than 12 months. 36 For motor vehicles being registered in the International 38 Registration Plan, the excise tax must be prorated for the number of months in the registration. If the registration period is for more than 12 months, for the number of months 40 in excess of 12 the next mill rate is used. 42 For vehicles being registered pursuant to Title 29-A, section 405, subsection 1, paragraph C, the excise tax must 44 be prorated for the number of months in the vehicles 46 registration. 48 The State Tax Assessor, with the advice and consent of the Secretary of State, shall certify software for the electronic calculation of motor vehicle excise tax pursuant 50

to Title 29-A, section 204, subsection 5.

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	Sec. 9. 36 MRSA §1484, sub-§3, ¶E is enacted to read:										
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	E. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, for										
4	registration renewals the Secretary of State may collect										
	excise taxes and transmit them to the appropriate										
6	municipalities.										
8	STATEMENT OF FACT										
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	This bill enacts the recommendations of the Secretary of										
12	State's Registration Improvement Committee. The committee's										
14	purpose was to find ways to simplify the motor vehicle										
14	registration process and to find alternate methods of processing										
16	registrations in order to improve customer service. This bill allows many vehicle registrations to be processed at locations										
10	such as car dealerships, other 3rd-party providers, shopping										
18	center kiosks, ATM machines, by mail and by home computer. The										
	bill protects municipal excise tax revenues.										
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	The bill makes the following changes.										
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	It defines a registration agent and allows the agent to										
24	conduct registration transactions under the Secretary of State's										
	direction.										
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	It establishes the nongovernmental vehicle registration										
28	program and allows the Secretary of State to approve and remove										
	registration agents. It permits agents to charge a service fee										
30	for performing the registration service.										
32	It provides for the certification of software regarding										
	excise and sales tax by the State Tax Assessor.										
34	-										
	It requires timely transmission of excise tax to towns.										
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	It provides for rulemaking, especially for the electronic										
38	transmission of data and funds between agents and the bureau and										
4.0	between the bureau and the towns.										
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4.2	It clarifies the information required on the registration										
42	document.										
44	It authorizes the Secretary of State to accept and process										
	remote registration transactions and to charge a fee per										
46	transaction.										

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verification.

It provides for possible alternative methods of insurance

2	It p	rovides	for	optio	onal	multiyear	fleet	registr	ations	for
	registrant	s with	100	or mo	ore :	registratio	ons, wi	th annu	al bil	ling
4	for regist	ration :	fees	and e	excis	e tax.				

It provides that, for a vehicle added to a fleet with a common expiration date, the excise tax is prorated for the actual number of months in the registration. Currently, registrants pay for 12 months of excise tax.

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It permits the Secretary of State to collect excise tax on behalf of municipalities and to transmit the tax to the appropriate towns.