

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

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Legislative Document

No. 644

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H.P. 475

House of Representatives, March 3, 2021

### An Act Regarding Motor Vehicle Registration Violations

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Received by the Clerk of the House on March 1, 2021. Referred to the Committee on Transportation pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

Presented by Representative CLOUTIER of Lewiston.  
Cosponsored by Senator SANBORN of Cumberland and  
Representatives: BRENNAN of Portland, CONNOR of Lewiston, CRAVEN of Lewiston,  
LOOKNER of Portland, MORALES of South Portland, PLUECKER of Warren, WARREN of  
Hallowell, Senator: LIBBY of Androscoggin.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §351, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2013, c. 112, §6, is further  
3 amended to read:

4 **1. Failure to register.** A person who operates a vehicle that is not registered in  
5 accordance with this Title, fails to register a vehicle or permits a vehicle that is not  
6 registered to remain on a public way, after a warning under subsection 2 has been issued,  
7 commits:

8 A. A traffic infraction for which a fine of not more than \$50 may be adjudged ~~if the~~  
9 ~~vehicle was registered and the registration has been expired for more than 30 days but~~  
10 ~~less than 150 days; or for a first offense. For each subsequent offense, a fine of not~~  
11 more than \$500 may be adjudged.

12 ~~B. A Class E crime if the vehicle was not registered or the registration has been expired~~  
13 ~~for 150 days or more.~~

14 **Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §351, sub-§1-A**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 433, §5 and  
15 affected by §28, is further amended to read:

16 **1-A. Residents required to register.** An owner of a vehicle who becomes a resident  
17 of this State shall register that vehicle in this State within 30 days of establishing residency.  
18 A person who operates or allows a vehicle that is not registered in accordance with this  
19 subsection to remain on a public way after a warning under subsection 2 has been issued  
20 commits:

21 A. A traffic infraction for which a fine of not more than \$50 may be adjudged ~~if more~~  
22 ~~than 30 days but less than 150 days has elapsed since establishing residency; or for a~~  
23 first offense. For each subsequent offense, a fine of not more than \$500 may be  
24 adjudged.

25 ~~B. A Class E crime if more than 150 days have elapsed since establishing residency.~~

26 **Sec. 3. 29-A MRSA §351, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 1999, c. 68, §1, is further  
27 amended to read:

28 **2. Operating a vehicle with an expired registration.** The owner or operator of a  
29 vehicle stopped by a law enforcement officer and having a registration that has expired  
30 ~~within the last 30 days~~ must be issued a warning, rather than a summons, in a form  
31 designated by the Chief of the State Police. This warning must state that:

32 A. Within ~~2~~ 10 business days, the owner or operator must register the vehicle;

33 B. The renewed registration expires on the same month as the previous registration;  
34 and

35 C. The registration fee is the same as for a full year's registration.

36 **Sec. 4. 29-A MRSA §351, sub-§5, ¶A**, as enacted by PL 2001, c. 671, §4, is  
37 amended to read:

38 A. A traffic infraction for which a ~~forfeiture~~ fine of not more than \$50 may be adjudged  
39 ~~if the registration has been expired for less than 150 days; or for a first offense. For~~  
40 each subsequent offense, a fine of not more than \$500 may be adjudged.

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**Sec. 5.** 29-A MRSA §351, sub-§5, ¶B, as enacted by PL 2001, c. 671, §4, is repealed.

**Sec. 6.** 29-A MRSA §351, sub-§7 is enacted to read:

**7. Notification.** The Secretary of State shall create a system to notify individuals with registrations that are to expire within the next 30 days. The notification must include:

- A. The date the vehicle's registration expires; and
- B. The available methods to obtain or renew the registration.

**SUMMARY**

This bill removes the designation as a Class E crime of the following: operating with expired motor vehicle registrations, failure to change out-of-state registrations and operating with expired 14-day registration plates. It requires a warning to be issued for all traffic stops for expired registrations. It requires registrations to be obtained or changed within 10 business days of a warning having been issued. It establishes a \$500 fine for 2nd and subsequent offenses. It also requires the Secretary of State to establish a notification system to inform individuals of registrations that are going to expire within the next 30 days.