
Transportation Committee

HB 1224

Brief Description: Rationalizing license plate replacement periods.

Sponsors: Representative Nixon.

Brief Summary of Bill

- The replacement of vehicle license plates may only occur at the time a vehicle is registered by a new owner, or at the request of an existing owner, provided that the plates have exceeded their "functional lifetime." The Department of Licensing may not require the replacement of license plates at any other time.

Hearing Date: 2/12/03

Staff: Reema Griffith (786-7301).

Background:

Under current law, the Department of Licensing (DOL) must provide for the periodic replacement of license plates to ensure maximum legibility and reflectivity. The law is silent on how "periodic replacement" is quantified, but required the DOL to determine this in accordance with empirical studies documenting the longevity of the reflective materials used to make license plates. Based on this mandate, the DOL passed a rule which set the required replacement cycle at seven years. The cost to replace a set of license plates is currently \$7.

Summary of Bill:

The term "functional lifetime" is coined to refer to the number of years license plate reflectivity can be maintained, which is currently set by rule at seven years.

The replacement of vehicle license plates may only occur at the time a vehicle is initially registered by a new owner, or at the request of an existing owner, provided that the plates have exceeded their "functional lifetime." The Department may not require the replacement of license plates at any other time.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 6, 2003.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.