

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE

—
S.P. 511 - L.D. 1618

Resolve, To Place a Temporary Moratorium on the Approval of Any New Motor Vehicle Registration Plates and Initiate a Registration Plate Working Group

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the continued increase in the variety of available registration plates has created logistical complications in the manufacturing, storage and administration of registration plates and imposed a considerable administrative burden on municipalities and other political subdivisions of the State performing registrations; and

Whereas, there is an absence of a strategic plan for the growth and usage of registration plates; and

Whereas, there is an immediate need to clearly define the role of specialty registration plates used for fund-raising by government and private entities under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 29-A, section 468; and

Whereas, specialty registration plates may convey messages that are considered controversial, unfair or not uniformly representative of other points of view; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Sec. 1. Temporary moratorium. Resolved: That the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, notwithstanding the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 29-A, sections 468 and 468-A, may not approve any specialty or recognition plate sponsor to begin the specialty or recognition plate signature gathering process, bring forth enabling legislation or otherwise initiate any new designs, redesigns or additional registration plates other than already approved and enacted for a period of 2 years from the effective date of this resolve.

Sec. 2. Registration plate working group. Resolved: That the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles shall convene a working group, referred to in this section as "the working group," to study the proliferation of registration plates in accordance with this section.

1. Membership. Notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the working group consists of 10 members as follows:

- A. One member appointed by the President of the Senate from the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation;
- B. One member appointed by the President of the Senate representing a state agency that is a recipient of funds generated by the sale of specialty license plates;
- C. One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives from the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation;
- D. One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives representing a municipality or other political subdivision of the State engaged in the registration of motor vehicles on behalf of the State; and
- E. One member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives who is responsible for overseeing the manufacture of registration plates in the State Prison pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 29-A, section 451, subsection 6;
- F. The Chief of the State Police or the chief's designee; and
- G. The Secretary of State or the secretary's designee and the following representatives from the Department of the Secretary of State:
 - (1) The Deputy Secretary of State for the Bureau of Motor Vehicles or the deputy's designee;
 - (2) One member appointed by the Secretary of State from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles technology and information services staff; and
 - (3) One member appointed by the Secretary of State from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles who is responsible for oversight of motor vehicle registrations.

The President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives shall seek recommendations from the cochairs of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation when making appointments under this subsection.

2. Compensation. Notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, members of the working group may not be compensated for their work on the working group, but legislative members may receive the legislative per diem.

3. Duties. Duties of the working group include:

- A. Identifying and documenting the roles and functions of the State's registration plates;
- B. Exploring and documenting challenges in the registration plate manufacturing process;
- C. Exploring the challenges of storing and securing registration plate inventories in municipalities and other political subdivisions of the State and in branch offices of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles;

- D. Examining the benefits, detriments and legal issues arising from specialty registration plates;
- E. Examining competing interests with specialty registration plates;
- F. Examining standards and systems developed by national and industry experts and exploring ways in which the State can adopt such standards and systems; and
- G. Making recommendations based on the findings of the working group.

4. Staff assistance. Notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles shall provide necessary staffing services to the working group. Legislative Council staff support is not authorized.

5. Report. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles shall provide a report by February 1, 2022 containing the findings and recommendations of the working group to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation. The Joint Standing Committee on Transportation may introduce legislation for presentation to the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature based on the recommendations in the report.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.