



Department of the Secretary of State Bureau of Motor Vehicles

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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

L.D. 1709 "An Act Regarding Antique Automobiles"

Testimony of Shenna Bellows, Secretary of State and
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Department of the Secretary of State

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Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, I am providing testimony respectfully in opposition of L.D. 1709 "An Act Regarding Antique Automobiles."

This bill reduces the age that an automobile or truck must be to be considered an antique auto in the motor vehicle laws if they are more than 35 years old to more than 25 years old. The bill requires a person registering an antique auto to show proof of registration and insurance for the motor vehicle used as that person's primary mode of transportation of passengers or goods and maintain the registration and insurance for that motor vehicle or a replacement motor vehicle during the term of registration of the antique auto. A person may not operate an antique auto when a motor vehicle used as that person's primary mode of transportation of passengers or goods is not registered and insured. A person who violates this provision commits a civil violation for which a fine of not more than \$2,500 may be adjudged and for which the Secretary of State may immediately revoke the registration for the antique auto.

The antique automobiles age requirement was originally more than 25 years and in 2023 it was amended to more than 35 years old. This age requirement was increased two years ago in Public Law 2023, chapter 634. In the 1950s and 1960s, vehicles were not manufactured as they are today. When a 1950s or 1960s vehicle became 26 years old, it had generally met the end of its usefulness as a person's primary mode of transportation. These vehicles then became show vehicles or used in parades. They were registered as antique vehicles and were exempt from inspection due to their limited use. This was all reasonable.

However, vehicles that are more than 25 years old today were manufactured in 1999. Next year a model year 2000 vehicle will become eligible under this bill to be classified as an antique vehicle. These newer vehicles were much more likely to be operated as a person's primary mode of transportation today. They last longer, are more reliable, and can be repaired and maintained properly for safe operation. It is for these reasons the law was changed in 2023 to define antique vehicles as a vehicle that is at least 35 years old. A 2000 model year vehicle is not a show or parade vehicle. If they are operated, they should be registered and inspected like all other vehicles. There are over 59,000 vehicles on the road today that are model years 1990 - 2000. It is for these reasons we oppose changing the definition of an antique vehicle back to 25 years old.

The rest of this bill is unnecessary, as BMV already has provisions in place that this bill is addressing.

Currently, when an antique automobile is registered, the registrant must fill out an Antique Auto Affidavit, which is notarized, certifying that the vehicle and intended use meets the definition of an antique automobile. The registrant also certifies that the antique automobile may not be used as the owner's primary mode of transportation of passengers or goods. The registrant must write their primary vehicle plate number on the Antique Auto Affidavit. Proof of insurance must be provided every time the primary vehicle is registered.

Knowingly making a false statement on the Antique Auto Affidavit is a Class E crime, currently under 29A MRSA §2103.

Thank you for your time today and I will be happy to answer any questions.