

CONTEMPORARY HISTORIAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, Inc.

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

PLUSWHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

By Larry Becker



Many rental car companies sell vehicles that they receive recall notices on instead of repairing them. The problem is that there is no law that requires used car dealers to inform buyers that the vehicle is subject to a recall. There is no national web site that lists recalled vehicles.

Oil-rich Texas has built more highways and bridges than any other state, but over the next two decades it will fall \$170 billion short of what it needs to keep the sprawling network in good shape. America's highway system, once a symbol of freedom and mobility envied by the world over, is crumbling physically and financially, the potentially disastrous consequence of a politically driven road-building binge. President Obama, state transportation officials, civil engineers, road builders and business groups all say that the country needs to invest trillions of dollars in its infrastructure, yet there is little consensus on how to finance it or which needs are most pressing. The oldest parts of the interstate highway system have reached the end of their life cycle, including thousands of bridges dating back to the 1960's, a potential threat to safety and commerce demonstrated by the Minnesota bridge collapse. The federal gas tax no longer covers the country's annual highway spending, but few leaders in Washington are willing to take on the political risk of increasing it. Lawmakers and special interest groups that bankroll their campaigns still exert outsized influence on where federal highway funding goes even tho there is a ban on members of Congress "earmarking" or skimming money for pet projects back home. Legislators are looking at various options to find money for bridge and highway repairs or replacement. (Information from article by Curtis Tate and Greg Gordon of the McClatchy Newspaper on Feb. 3, 2013) Does this mean that we can expect tax increases?

Many cities across the U.S. are replacing their street signs with new ones that no longer are in capital letters. A few years ago in (Washington D.C. of course) the feds decided to require cities and counties to switch to street sign styles that would be easier for older drivers to read and more reflective at night. The feds have backed off their deadline to have all the signs replaced, but still require it to be done.

Information on the 2013 CHVA National Tour is available on the CHVA web site. The tour starts August 24th at the Dells in Wisconsin and ends in St Louis on Sept. 1.

Not all of the following state bills are laws at this time. They have been introduced and are currently under consideration by the respective legislatures.

ALASKA

The state House of Representatives is considering creating short-term driver's licenses for temporary residents that would expire as soon as a temporary resident's authorization to live in the U.S. ends and not the current five years.

ARIZONA

The city of Tucson plans to add routes for bicyclists who don't want to ride next to automobile traffic on busy streets. Construction of bike boulevards could begin this fall. Bike boulevards are residential streets that are marked by signs and that have signals at busy intersections.

Authorities in BullHead City have set up two signs to warn motorists about burros in or near a roadway following six traffic accidents since December involving the animals.

Phoenix City officials want to enliven parts of the downtown. One idea being considered is closing off some streets to automobile traffic to make the streets more friendly for pedestrians. This is just one of the proposals being considered.

ARKANSAS

Legislation has been introduced in the Arkansas House to amend a current state law to require the consent of only 38% of property owners within three miles of a proposed motor-vehicle racing facility before construction of the facility can begin. Currently, construction requires the approval of 75% of property owners and voters.

ARIZONA

A Senate committee has passed a bill requiring police to take training highlighting a ban on profiling of motorcyclists by law enforcement officers.

CALIFORNIA

The CHP has posted safety rules for motorcyclists squeezing past traffic, which has been known as lane-splitting. California is the only state in the country that allows lane-splitting, also known as ‘white-lining’, where motorcyclists pass vehicles in adjacent lanes by driving between them. The CHP officials say they have posted the first-ever written guidelines on their website as part of a broader state highway safety initiative. Some of the guidelines are: Do not travel more than 10 mph faster than the flow of traffic, do not split lanes when the traffic is moving 30 mph or faster. Avoid splitting between wide vehicles, such as RV, and buses and at toll booths. Rules for other drivers include intentionally blocking or impeding a motorcyclist in a way that could cause harm to the rider is illegal. It is also illegal to open a vehicle door to impede a motorcycle.

The Golden Gate Bridge has begun testing a new all electronic toll system. Motorists, who fail to pay a toll, for whatever reason, can expect to receive an invoice in the mail just for that amount, as opposed to the current policy that levels an additional fine. Motorists can now go on line to register their license plates and credit card information with the bridge district and pay tolls as they are incurred. The start of the system was delayed for a few months. Tourists or anyone who knows they will be making a trip across the bridge in advance have the option of making toll payments up to 30 days before their visit, or to use the other payment methods offered to frequent bridge travelers.

Ca. drivers would be banned from texting with hands-free mobile devices under legislation proposed on Feb. 11th. Current state law prohibits drivers from texting with hand-held devices, but not those that operate on voice command. AB 313 would delete the existing exception for voice-controlled texting devices.

The Bay Area Rapid Transit agency plans to again experiment with allowing bikes aboard trains during peak commuting hours. BART will lift its ban on the practice from March 18th through March 22nd.

Bay Area residents may get to walk on the San Francisco – Oakland Bay Bridge if a proposed grand opening celebration is approved. The Contra Costa Times reports that

the Bay Area Toll Authority is considering a proposal that would open the bridge to 125,000 people on foot as part of a Labor Day celebration of the new eastern span.

COLORADO

Legislation has been introduced in the state Legislature to extend the emissions exemptions to vehicles that have not yet reached their 10th model year. Current law only exempts vehicles that are four years old or newer. The bill would also exempt previously registered motor vehicles that have never failed an emissions control inspection and create a senior citizen hardship exemption whereby a senior citizen may register one motor vehicle without obtaining an emission inspection.

It does not look like Aspen will enact a 14 mph speed limit after all. A Federal government manual on traffic control devices says displayed speed limits must be in multiples of 5 mph. City Council officials has suggested the 14 mph speed limit to get the attention of drivers and slow them down in the West end neighborhood. Now the Council may lower the speed limit city wide from 25 mph to 20 mph.

The Pitkin County Sheriff's Office is using pace cars to make drivers slow down on congested State Hwy 82. Deputies began the experiment on Jan. 28th, the Aspen Times reported.

CONNECTICUT

Legislation has been introduced to eliminate a provision in the Connecticut statutes that allows antiques, rare or special-interest motor vehicles to be assessed at a value of no more than \$500. Under the bill, valuation of these vehicles would be done in the same manner as all other motor vehicles in the state. Vehicles in Connecticut are taxed by the municipality in which they are registered and rates vary by municipality. The municipality calculates the owner's tax liability for a particular vehicle by multiplying the "mill rate" by 70% of the vehicles true and actual value. The state is looking for sources of revenue and this is just one of them. SEMA is expected to mount an effort to defeat the proposed legislation.

GEORGIA

Savannah city officials are putting up bigger road signs to welcome visitors to Georgia's oldest city. The three signs will be placed at three main roadways into Savannah.

Georgia county motorists faced long lines and higher fees at county tag offices as the new title tax laws took effect on March 1. According to an Atlanta Journal report, the

new tax involves a one-time title tax that replaces sales tax and the annual “birthday” tax.

INDIANA

CSX railroad has scrapped plans to increase the speed of trains passing thru Muncie after city officials raised concerns about safety. CSX wanted to increase the train speeds from 30 mph to 60 mph. City officials voiced concern that the higher speed could cause more train-auto accidents.

ILLINOIS

Federal approval has been given to the Elgin-O’Hare Western Access Project which will give commuters a new way to get around bottlenecks surrounding O’Hare International Airport. The \$3.4 billion project is scheduled to start this year.

On Jan. 27th, Illinois became the fourth and most populous state to give illegal immigrants permission to drive, but nagging concerns remain about whether there are enough safeguards to avoid fraud and other pitfalls other states have faced. It is estimated that 250,000 people unlawfully residing in the state are to apply for a three-year temporary driver’s license and require them to get insurance and training. The Illinois secretary of state’s office said the licenses will be available starting in November.

MAINE

The College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor has opened a solar powered charging station for any electric vehicle that needs a charge.

Maine’s Acadia National Park is getting \$800,000 in federal funding to build an intermodal transportation center where visitors can park their cars and take a free shuttle bus to destinations throughout the park.

MARYLAND

Legislation has been introduced in the Maryland House of Delegates to require the issuance of only a single license plate for motor vehicles. The bill, favored by state hobbyist, requires that the single registration plate be attached on the front of tractors and on the rear of all other vehicles. A second bill provides that vehicles required to display two registration plates. The front plate may be stored inside the vehicle if the vehicle was manufactured without a means to secure and display a front plate.

MICHIGAN

On Feb. 19th, Secretary of State Ruth Johnson's office began accepting applications for illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as children to get driver's licenses and state ID's.

MONTANA

Legislation has been introduced in Montana to allow the owner of a motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer or pole trailer manufactured in 1948, 1949 or 1950 to display a single original Montana license plate that is affixed to the rear of the vehicle. Under the bill, the original Montana license plate must be legible and bear the year that matches the year in which the vehicle was manufactured. The measure would reinstate the single plate requirement that existed for motor vehicles between 1948-1950 model years. The bill has been approved by the Montana House of Representatives and sent to the State Senate.

The city of Missoula's ban on the use of cellphones while driving took effect on Feb. 5th and carries fines of up to \$300. The Missoulan newspaper reports a second citation within a year could lead to a \$500 fine. The ban allows for hands-free use of phones.

As a result of the opposition expressed by the Montana car club community, legislation to limit the number of inoperable vehicles allowed on private property under 'community decay' laws was withdrawn from consideration by the House Local Government Committee. Under the proposed bill, four or more "junk vehicles" on private property would have constituted "community decay."

A 55-year-old Billings man who has been convicted of Dui 14 times was sentenced to 20 years in prison. The Billings Gazette reported that District Judge Susan Watters also ordered William Dean Grussing to complete a state alcohol treatment program.

MISSOURI

The miner Board of Alderman voted to prohibit police from parking and waiting for speeders on Interstate 55. Alderman Terry Cole told t the Southeast Missourian newspaper "I don't want them sitting under a tree, then gunning it to catch a speeder". Cole said the police cars are too old for that kind of strain.

Legislation has been introduced in the state Senate to require the issuance of only a single license plate for motor vehicles. The bill also applies to personalized plates. If enacted into law, the measure would allow vehicle owners to obtain a second plate under limited circumstances (for example, certain property carrying commercial motor

vehicles applicants can request two plates). Among other things, the measure would save money, conserve resources and bring Missouri in line with other states that have moved to a single plate requirement.

NEBRASKA

A bill sponsored by Sen. John Harms, 72, would require a cognitive test for drivers older than 80. Drivers who fail a cognitive test could take a written driving test, Harms said.

The city of Lincoln has started installing 1,300 parking meters that accept credit cards. According to the Lincoln Journal Star, parking rates increased 50 cents on March 1st, making the hourly rate \$1.

Almost one third of the state's 24 ethanol plants have closed because high corn prices make it unprofitable. The Ag Processing Cooperative closed its 55 million-gallon-a-year plant in Hastings. The Grand Island Independent reports it's the seventh plant to close.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

A legislative committee is taking testimony on a bill that would require elderly drivers to take road tests to renew their driver's licenses. Rep. Tara Sad said 85 might be the age with which to start.

NEW JERSEY

The year long Operation Facial Scrub to uncover motorists who use fake I.D. to get licenses has led to the prosecutions of 38 people, and more than 600 cases being referred to prosecutors. Facial-recognition technology scanned all 19 million photos in the Motor Vehicle Commission database to see whether different names were associated with the same people.

NEW MEXICO

Santa Fe County officials, citing security, have decided against parking in the county's new underground courthouse garage even though parking for visitors was part of the pitch for financing the project.

OKLAHOMA

Highway Patrol records show troopers are graded on how many tickets they write and the number of arrests they make. The agency's Troop L wants troopers to write four

tickets for every 10 traffic stops and make 30 arrests each year for alcohol related offenses.

Motorists caught driving without insurance could have their license plate confiscated under a bill being pushed by Insurance Commissioner John Doak. One bill would allow police to remove an uninsured driver's tag and replace it with a temporary sticker. A second bill would increase fines for driving without insurance.

The state Transportation Commission awarded a \$15 million contract to replace the Interstate 44 Bridge over 177th East Ave. The highway will be widened from four lanes to eight lanes.

SOUTH CAROLINA

On Feb. 11th, the state unveiled a license plate in honor of Mayesville native Mary McLeod Bethune, who founded Bethune -Cookman University in Daytona Beach, Fl., and founded the National Council of Negro Women.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Residents of Pierre can make appointments for driver's licenses at exam stations in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Aberdeen and Watertown.

UTAH

A proposal in the state legislature would make it illegal for drivers to smoke in their cars if they have a passenger younger than 16. The first offense is a warning and a \$45 fine for the second time.

Specialty license plates bearing the motto "In God We Trust" and an American flag have won preliminary approval from lawmakers in the Utah House. Drivers would pay \$25 a year for the tag. Proceeds would support the Provo based America's Freedom Festival.

On Feb. 11th, the Utah House of Representatives approved legislation making it illegal for Utah drivers to smoke in their cars if they have a child as a passenger. The measure would make it a second offense to smoke while driving with someone under 16 years old.

Gov. Herbert is asking drivers to slow down after a series of accidents in which motorists crashed into Utah Highway Patrol cars. There have been 13 accidents this

year in which out-of-control vehicles hit patrol cars, including four accidents over the first weekend in February.

VIRGINIA

Legislation has been reintroduced in the Legislature for a bill amended by SEMA that the governor vetoed last year. The bill, which would totally exempt the license tax on all vehicles and parts car stored on private property for the purpose of restoration or repairs. Some localities charge an annual license tax that ranges from \$100 to \$500 for vehicles that do not display current license plates. The bill has been approved by the House of Delegates and has been sent to the Senate Transportation Committee for consideration.

VERMONT

Following a month-long amnesty in March, police will step up efforts to collect \$150,000 owed the town in 5,500 parking tickets and late fees.

WASHINGTON

The Spokane City fire dept. will no longer go to the county jail to draw blood from drunken driving or drug suspects who are booked into custody. The department says it costs \$300 each time an engine rolls out from the station.

WEST VIRGINIA

Gov. Tomblin wants to revise a state law to make it clear that police officers can test drivers for drugs just as they can test them for alcohol.

WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

The New Jersey Transit reopened the Hoboken Terminal waiting room on Feb. 5th. It had been closed since Dec. 19th when environmental consultants detected mold stemming from Superstorm Sandy.

Lake Havasu City officials have sided with cyclists over horses in who can use trails in a desert park. The Toda's News-Herald has reported that city officials have decreed that horseback riding won't be allowed the rest of this year on trails in the 1,100 acre Special Activities and Recreation Area.

A rusting bridge that connects Owensboro Ky., to southern Indiana will close for six months while it gets a \$17 million paint job. The Messenger-Inquirer reports the Glover H. Cary Bridge, known as the "blue bridge," will be closed from May to November.

The Memphis Tenn. City Council has voted to rename three city parks that honor the Civil War. The council stripped the name off the statute of Confederate fighter Nathan Bedford Forrest and renamed the park Health Science Park. It also renamed Confederate Park as Memphis Park and Jefferson Davis Park as Mississippi River Park.

The Hawaii Visitor Aloha Society and Hawaii Tourism Authority are planning on issuing an online brochure late this year with tips for traveling safely in the islands. Officials say at least 11 tourists have died in accidents this year. Five tourists drowned, five died in traffic accidents and two fell from cliffs.

*Larry Becker
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