

CONTEMPORARY HISTORIAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, Inc.

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

PLUS WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE



By Larry Becker

On Sept. 22nd, the debt-ridden private company running the Indiana Toll Road announced that it intends to transfer its operations to a new entity under a bankruptcy filing on 9/22. Chicago based ITR Concessions Co. filed the papers on 9/22 and announced that it would sell all of its assets including all rights to the Toll Road. (Never thought that we would ever see something like that)!

According to a survey by the Edmonds Automotive group, the greatest concerns that motorists have while traveling on: #1 flat tire, #2 need a rest stop, but it is 100 miles away, #3 running out of gas, # 4 getting lost for more than an hour and # 5 no charger for dead cellphones.

Many auto loan companies who make loans to subprime borrowers (credit score below 640) require that a device which disables the ignition system via remote for late or missed payments to be installed in the vehicles. Using GPS technology on the devices, lenders can track the car's location and movements. The devices have been installed in over 2 million vehicles.

Not all of the following state bills are laws at this time. They have recently been introduced and are currently under consideration by the respective legislatures. Many state legislators and members of Congress have adjourned for the summer. They are taking their annual recess as they feel they are overworked.



ALABAMA

The state will shut down prime parking spots near Birmingham’s civic center. For years people attending concerts and other events at the civic center and coliseum have parked in lots underneath Interstate 20/59. But the state says the area is no longer safe because of the age of the interstate bridges.

In 2013, state troopers issued more than 42,300 citations for violations of the state’s seatbelt law.

CALIFORNIA

On August 30th, it was announced that legislation to establish an advisory committee to study a road-use fee was approved by the Assembly and Senate. The bill has been sent to the governor for his approval or veto. Under the bill, the group would propose the fee as an alternative to the gas tax and make recommendations on the design of a pilot program. According to supporters, a road-usage fee has the potential to distribute the gas tax burden across all vehicles regardless of fuel source and to minimize the impact of the current regressive gas tax structure. According to Opponents, the bill seeks to penalize national efforts to create a more fuel-efficient vehicle-fleet by taxing drivers based on vehicle mileage. As the gas tax revenues decrease due to hybrid and electric vehicle ownership, states are looking for new sources of funding for pet projects. (Information supplied by SEMA).

More than half of the used vehicles registered in the state through the first six months of this year are older than 10 years according to the Sacramento-based California New Car Dealers Association.

AB 2293 increases the insurance requirements for ride sharing companies. When drivers are cruising in search of passengers but have not yet accepted the ride request, they would need to carry liability insurance worth at least \$200,000, far lower than the \$750,000 initially sought. The minimum rises to \$1 million when the driver has accepted a request or pickup of a passenger. The bill was approved by the Senate and returned to the Assembly for a final vote on August 29th.

DMV is now giving the drivers test on touch screens in 120 of its 170 offices. DMV states that it reduces wait times to take the test as clerks no longer have to grade the tests. DMV still has written tests for people who refuse to take the touch screen test. They say that eventually they will have the tests available in 31 languages, but at present only two languages are available.

A recent report states that DMV has overcharged some vehicle buyers on sales tax. Sales tax on vehicles is determined by the buyers zip codes, but some cities have an extra sales tax that is only for city residents, but DMV has been charging sales tax even though the buyer lives in the county and not the city. No solution on how to get a refund has been announced.

A proposal in San Francisco would eliminate much of the city's fleet of passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks over 13 years and replace with Contracts with services like Zipcar or City Car Share.

A reminder!! A new law takes effect in Sept. that requires drivers to maintain at least three feet between a vehicle and a bicycle on the road. According to the new law, a driver must allow three feet of distance when overtaking or passing a bicyclist.

There is still time to apply for the new Legacy license plates. The plates are – black lettering on yellow background, yellow lettering on a black background or yellow lettering on a blue background. The cost is \$50 and 7,500 plates must be ordered by Jan. 1.

The city of Pasadena is turning 14 parking meters into repositories for donations made to non-profits that serve the homeless, the Los Angeles Times reports. The meters, painted orange and covered with smiley

faces and inspirational sayings are also designed to raise awareness of homelessness.

The federal government has finally approved the design of the immigrant driver's licenses. The licenses will have the phrase 'FEDERAL LIMITS APPLY' on the front. The licenses were authorized by AB 60 in 2013, but did not meet federal requirements.

Many California residents have lost their driver's licenses and vehicle documents due to the many forest fires this year, but the DMV has announced that it will help by issuing duplicate copies of the papers.

COLORADO

Construction crews have started installing the concrete linings on a newly widened tunnel on Interstate 70 near Idaho Springs, the Summit Daily News reports.

CONNECTICUT

The state Department of Transportation highway safety office has launched the first part of an anti-speeding campaign in rural Connecticut, where officials say most deaths occur due to automobile speeding.

D. C. WASHINGTON

The city's inspector general reported that drivers got speeding tickets for violations they didn't commit, and for vehicles they're never owned, the Washington Post reports. Three city agencies issued nearly 2.5 million parking and traffic tickets in fiscal 2013.

FLORIDA

Citing costs, Brevard County's tourism chief said the Space Coast Office of Tourism may punt on plans to spend \$3 million dollars on a tourist welcome center off Interstate 95 in Mims, Florida Today reports

HAWAII

A new study says Hawaii has the worst-performing highways in the nation. The report by the Reason Foundation, a libertarian think tank, ranked Hawaii among the worst for congestion, deficient bridges and pavement conditions.

INDIANA

Indiana Dept. of Transportation officials are warning drivers to be prepared for delays on Interstate 65 in southern Indiana as work has begun on the Ohio River Bridges Project. Northbound and southbound I-65 will narrow from 3 lanes to two from the Kennedy Bridge north for nearly a mile and half. The project is called the “Big Squeeze.”

KANSAS

A smart-phone-base-ride-sharing service (Uber) has arrived in Wichita according to the Wichita Eagle newspaper.

Reno County has taken steps to develop a comprehensive route for bicycle riders in the county. The county commissioners have agreed to install four bike-route advisory signs on old Kansas 61 advising drivers to be aware of the bicycle riders.

KENTUCKY

Watch where you bike your bike!! A woman who commutes to work on a bicycle is being fined for repeatedly violating a law on careless driving. Cherokee Schill battled the violations in court, saying that she should not be forced to travel on the shoulder of U.S. 27.

LOUISIANA

A state funded feasibility study finds tolls starting at 18 cents a mile could pay from one-quarter to one-half of the more than \$3 billion dollar price tag to complete Interstate 49 South from Lafayette to New Orleans.

MICHIGAN

The Macomb County school buses are the latest ones to be outfitted with cameras to record vehicles that pass while buses' red lights are flashing. Ignoring the stop lights is a violation punishable by a fine and community service.

MINNESOTA

The state will start a \$2.5 million dollar repair and resurfacing project on most of its 20 worst-rated roads in Mid-October.

MISSOURI

Texting while driving will soon be a crime in St. Charles regardless of the age of the driver. The St. Charles City Council has voted to prohibit texting while driving and Mayor Sally Faith has signed the bill.

A group that advocates for creating biking and hiking trails along abandoned rail lines wants a cross-state trail that would link Kansas City with the Katy T to establish a 400 mile loop across the state.

Want to have your own speed bump?? Thieves in Lincoln have stolen about \$5500 dollars worth of speed bumps recently installed to prevent drag racing along McCormick Dr. City Traffic Operations Manager Scott Opfer said the 48 pieces of rubber, weighting a total of 2,400 pounds were secured to the concrete with 6-inch bolts.

NEVADA

The Nevada Transportation Board wants the proposed Interstate 11 to extend from Las Vegas to Interstate 80 using the general route of U.S. 95.

The state was awarded nearly \$30 million dollars in federal funding for projects including improved bike lanes in Las Vegas and rapid bus service between Reno and Sparks.

The state is getting more than \$11 million dollars in federal transportation money to help build the Boulder City Bypass. The bypass aims to send highway traffic around the small town of Boulder City rather than through it. Early estimates put the project price tag at about \$600 million dollars.

NEW YORK

The New York City Dept. of Finance said the city is owed than \$16 million dollars in unpaid parking tickets issued to foreign diplomatic vehicles. Egypt tops the list of more than 180 countries with nearly \$2 million dollars in outstanding debt.

OKLAHOMA

Gov. Fallin announced that the state has signed a vehicle tag compact with the Choctaw Nation that will establish how Oklahoma and the tribe will work together to issue Choctaw vehicle tags.

Nearly half of the 1,947 construction projects in a \$6.3 billion dollar, eight-year plan, Oklahoma highway officials approved the first part of Sept. are aimed at fixing bad bridges, the Journal Record reports.

OREGON

Nearly 900,000 Oregonians who have a driver's license or state ID cards but aren't registered to vote will soon get a postcard reminding them to register. The Secretary of State's Office say the postcards were mailed out on September 15th.

TEXAS

On Sept. 2nd, updated University of Texas specialty license plates went on sale. The updated versions feature the UT Tower, Texas Longhorns and school color, burnt orange.

Always bigger in Texas! The state dept. of Transportation is backing off a proposal to raise the height limit of billboards by almost 22 feet – bringing the maximum to 65 feet – following public opposition, an

agency spokesman said. Advertisers say taller signs are needed because the speed of travel has increased and highways have expanded.

VERMONT

Work on the 140-year-old Sanborn Covered Bridge that is in danger of falling into the Passumpsic River has stopped due for lack of money. It is estimated that \$400,000 is needed to start work and another \$800,000 is needed to complete the project.

VIRGINIA

Secretary of transportation Aubrey Layne said the state most likely won't get a permit to build a new toll road next to U.S. Route 460 because of concerns over its environmental impact on hundreds of acres of wetland. Public hearings have been set for sometime in Oct.

WASHINGTON

Two Puget Sound school districts, Bethel & Highline, have installed cameras on their school buses to catch motorists who illegally pass when lights are flashing and the stop sign is extended. The fine for not stopping is \$394 dollars.

WYOMING

National Park officials are considering a proposal to update and repair many of the overlooks and trails on the north and south sides of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. The proposal comes after an 8-year-old died after losing her footing in August. (It is not clear whether it is the Grand Canyon or Yellowstone or does Yellowstone have their own Grand Canyon?)

WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

This year marks four decades since President Nixon signed a mandate that set the maximum speed limit 55 mph, helping to fend off an oil crisis. Today, speed limits vary by state from a high of 85 mph (on certain sections of highways in Texas to a low of 55 mph in Alaska and D.C. All states have different speed limits on their highways depending on whether it is a toll road, freeway, divided highways, rural roads and urban roads. Texas State Highway 130, which stretches 91 miles between Austin and San Antonio, has a speed limit of 85 mph, but the rest of the state is 80. Three states, Idaho, Utah and Wyoming have a speed limit of 80 mph. Washington D.C. speed limit is 55 on urban freeways, but 65 on rural roads. As you travel, remember that speed limits vary in all states.

Tesla has announced a partnership with a Chinese company, China Unicom, to build 400 electric car charging stations in China.

Female motorcycle owners made up 12percent of the U.S. motorcycle market in 2012, up from 8 percent in 2009, the Motorcycle Industry Council states. The number of female riders rose from 4.3 million in 2003 to 6.7 million in 2012. Most manufactures are making their motorcycles smaller, lighter and more suitable for female owners.

Buying a new car!!! Experian Automotive states that in the first quarter of 2014, 24.9% of all new-car loans were 73 to 84 months long. Four years ago, less than 10% of loans were that long. In fact, such lengthy terms have pulled the average new-car loan to 66 months.

GM plans to offer a self-driving car some time in 2016 or 2017. The vehicle will be offered in the Cadillac series. Technology by a French auto maker that will park your driverless vehicle in specially equipped garages or parking places, then return it to you with using a thumb swipe on your cell phone. The system is at least a decade or longer away, however most states must permit driverless cars, and regulations have to be crafted. Special equipment will be required to be installed for the self parking car to be used.

Be warned!! The City Council of Topeka, Kansas is considering making public nudity a misdemeanor offense.

There are some problems with the voice recognition systems in vehicles equipped with them. The main problem is that the system does not recognize various accents such as a southern drawl, a British accent and other accents. The auto industry say that vehicles with voice recognition systems demand is growing. Manufactures of the systems are working on solving the accent problems.

Adjusted for population growth, January to June miles driven this year are down 8.5% since a peak in 2007.

If that is true, why is the traffic so heavy when I am on the road???

Larry Becker

27 Sept. 2014

