

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

PLUS WHAATSUP HERE AND THERE



by Larry Becker

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

ALABAMA

County clerks are having trouble keeping enough one dollar bills to make change for a \$26 fine for seatbelt violations, so the Tuscaloosa City Council is considering raising the fine to \$30. The problem began in June after state lawmakers tacked a \$16 “solicitor fee” on seatbelt fines collected by local governments.

ARIZONA

Arizona motorists must use booster seats or other restraint systems for children through age 7 who are not more than 4feet 9 inches tall. The new law took effect August 2nd. Violators will be fined \$50.

CALIFORNIA

AB 1658, which authorizes the DMV to issue license plates that resemble those of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s has been approved by the Senate and Assembly and sent to Gov. Brown for signing. The DMV must receive 7,500 applications for the plates by Jan. 1 before the plates can be issued.

A bill to increase the cost of fines for using a handheld phone while driving is being discussed in the Assembly. If passed, the bill would also add a point to the offenders driving record for second or subsequent offenses. A provision that would have extended the fine to bicyclists was dropped from the bill.

California will issue driver's licenses to thousands of young illegal immigrants once the Obama Administration grants them work permits, a move that could reignite a divisive debate that has simmered for nearly 20 years.

(Information from article by Matt O'Brien of the Bay Area news Group)

CONNECTICUT

The city of New Haven is launching a test program that will eliminate left over time on parking meters. Sensors installed in parking spaces on Chapel Street near Yale University will automatically reset the meters after a vehicle leaves the spot. The system records how long each car is using a meter and is designed to determine how many cars are parking in the area and how long they stay. (If the system works, you can expect it in other cities very soon).

DELAWARE

Citations issued by the city's red-light camera program jumped 83% between fiscal 2011 and 2012. The city has switched the cameras at 34 intersections from still photos to video, allowing police to more accurately detect drivers who do not come to a full stop before turning right. The cameras have cut the number of crashes an average 41% at their new placement.

GEORGIA

The Carroll County school system has added schoobus cameras aimed at nabbing motorists who break traffic laws, officials say. Cameras can capture images of motorists who illegally drive by stopped school buses while students are getting on or off.

INDIANA

The city of Bloomington's efforts to crack down on parking scofflaws is paying off so far this year. Ohio-based Capitol Recovery Systems have collected \$79,866 in unpaid traffic fines. That's up \$54,412 in the first seven months of last year, when the city's legal dept. filed claims with Monroe circuit Court.

MARYLAND

Fredrick County is the first county in the state to permantly install cameras on school buses under a state law passed last year. The system supplied by Xerox records videos of drivers who illegally pass a bus with its "stop" arm activated. Violators face a \$125 fine.

MASSACHUSETTS

MBTA riders looking to buy senior, Transportation Access, Visually Impaired or Ride Charlie Card passes can now visit a new store in the Downtown Crossing train station. Customers will also be able to transfer value from paper Charlie Tickets to plastic Charlie cards and replace damaged passes.

MICHIGAN

The Detroit International Bridge Company, which owns the Ambassador Bridge connecting Detroit to Windsor, Ontario, said it was ready to resurrect plans for a Harsens Island bridge. Champions Auto Ferry notified the state Public Service Commission that it planned to end ferry service in the future.

NEW JERSEY

Passengers who plan to take a train from New York for a football game, or concert at MetLife Stadium can now buy tickets on line. New Jersey transit is testing online ticket sales to see whether it can be expanded to other rail lines.

The state Supreme Court upheld Kyleigh's Law which required drivers under 18 to display a decal on their license plates. The law, named for a teenager who was killed in a 2006 crash, is meant to aid police officers in enforcing restricted driving privileges for young drivers.

More than 700 people who received tickets since a parking ordinance took effect on June 22 at Point Pleasant Beach can pay a \$48 fine and not go to court. Parking was restricted to reduce noise from people leaving the boardwalk area in the early morning.

Police statewide have announced a crackdown on drunken and impaired driving.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The state Turnpike Authority Board has approved toll increases to take effect in Nov. on the 109-mile highway. The plan calls for cash toll increases of \$1 at the York Plaza and 50 cents at Wells, West Gardiner and Gloucester.

NEW MEXICO

The city of Santa Fe unveiled two electric vehicle charging stations in the Railyard Parking Garage. The stations are "Level One" which means that small electric vehicles, such as electric motorcycles can be charged within three hours. Larger Chevy Volt, Nissan Leaf or any Tesla cars can be topped off. The city has plans to offer Level Two stations for faster charging.

NORTH CAROLINA

The Cary Town Council has voted to discontinue one of the state's last red-light camera systems. The town has had red-light cameras at 15 intersections. It will continue to issue citations for up to two weeks as it voids its contract with Redflex.

OHIO

The state department of Transportation plans a major renovation of the Lytle Tunnel in downtown Cincinnati starting in the spring of 2014. The tunnel opened in 1970. The \$34 million project could jump start the overhaul of historic Lytle Park and attract more restaurants, apartments and condos to the area.

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles has chosen 46 attractions, slogans and facts to make up a background for the state's new license plates that are set to hit the road next spring with bigger, bolder blue letters and numbers on a gray backdrop.

OKLAHOMA

A new policy places restrictions on when Highway Patrol troopers can join pursuits. Troopers are no longer allowed to join pursuits of fleeing drivers when the chase is started by another agency unless the agency asks for help.

RHODE ISLAND

Residents of Aquidneck Island staged a protest on August 19th against a plan to put tolls on the new Sakonnet Bridge. Lawmakers authorized the tolls, which would not go into effect until next summer. The Turnpike Authority already charges a toll on the Pell Bridge. There are no tolls on the Mount Hope Bridge.

SOUTH CAROLINA

The Beaufort County Council OK'd a \$268,000 contract with J & W Corp. to run ferries to Daufuskie Island from Sept. 1 thru June 30th. There is no bridge from the island to the mainland.

Students at Beaufort High School must not only pay a fee for a parking pass at the school, but they must enroll and pay for a class on defense driving.

TENNESSEE

State troopers are targeting traffic violators in school zones. The speed limit is 15 mph in school zones and the fine for speeding is up to \$500. It is also against the law to pass a school bus when it is stopped and loading or unloading passengers. Fines are \$250 to \$1,000.

UTAH

State transportation officials are planning more than \$1.5 million in improvements for bicycle travel on a scenic stretch of State Route 18 that was disrupted by a recent highway project.

VERMONT

State and local officials are considering a new traffic design to help ease congestion at Interstate 89 exit 16 in Colchester. Construction on the proposed "double crossover diamond" which lessens traffic by making it easier for motorists to get onto the highway without stopping could begin in 2014.

WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

The U.S. District Court of Appeals dismissed a lawsuit which challenged the EPA authority to permit 15% ethanol content in gasoline for 2001 and newer model year cars and light trucks. The suit was dismissed on the basis that the groups bring the suit, which included

trade associations representing manufactures of cars, boats and power equipment, along with the petroleum and food industry, lacked standing to bring the suit.

Many state DMV's are trying to lighten their office loads by having private companies do transactions, At least 10 states have started outsourcing the driving test to cut costs and reduce congestion at offices that also handle vehicle licensing, according to a survey done by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administration and USA Today research. South Carolina started a pilot program in 13 counties. Other states using third party testers are: Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Michigan, Nebraska, Texas and Utah.

The San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit trains allowed bicycles on all trains during August as part of a test to see whether commuter – time blackouts were still necessary. BART normally bans bicycles during weekday morning and evening commuter rush hours on all but the Richmond – Fremont line. It is not known when the results of the survey will be released.



AUGUST 27TH