



Representative Anthony DeVitis

House Bill 71

Transportation and Public Safety Committee

Sponsor Testimony – Representative Anthony DeVitis

March 15, 2017

Chairman Green, Vice Chairman Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee thank you for the opportunity to bring House Bill 71 before you. H.B. 71 establishes statute that eliminates the failure to display a license plate on the front of an Ohio motor vehicle as a primary offense and makes it a secondary offense and also limits the fine to \$100. The bill also prohibits being ticketed for the absence of the front plate while being parked legally. The purpose of this bill is to bring Ohio nearer into balance with our surrounding states, all of which do not require a front license plate.

As automakers design vehicles, they continue to work towards improved aerodynamics and performance with an end goal that yields better fuel economy and attractive designs. Often times these vehicles are manufactured with no consideration for a front license plate due to these design goals. This results in a challenge for Ohio's drivers with regard to complying with the current Ohio license plate law. Please take into consideration that all five of our surrounding states have autos produced for them and not always are they produced with front license plate bracket. That being said, buying a vehicle produced for Ohio with a front license bracket could result in a lower resale value for those consumers if they should happen to sell their vehicle to someone in one of those states. It's an economic burden for the Ohio consumer in more ways than one.

Many Ohio residents live bordering Indiana, Michigan, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Kentucky and often purchase their vehicles in those states. Since none of those states require a front license plate, Ohio's drivers often find themselves dealing with unexpected consequences. They face the decision of drilling mounting holes into their car, finding a bracket kit suitable for it, or assume it's not needed and then have an unknown risk of being pulled over and ticketed. Residents of our neighboring states however, sometimes have jobs in Ohio and are able to drive and park their vehicles in our state without worrying at all about being ticketed for not displaying a front license plate. They are exempt. They have more driving privileges in Ohio than our own residents.

The Ohio Department of Public Safety has expressed to me the need for the front plate in aiding crime fighting, so in drafting my bill I have made certain to retain the requirement to display a front plate. I would presume that nearly all Ohio drivers will continue to affix the plate on their vehicle and have a result of negligible impact on law enforcement.

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Owners of vehicles in noncompliance can be fined for each offense up to a maximum of \$100 albeit with no points added to their driving record. It will be at the discretion of the vehicle owner when they decide to install a front license plate to avoid future citations. Again, House Bill 71 is not eliminating the front license plate requirement, but rather lessening the burden our constituents experience for something that is not entirely in their control.

Chairman Green, Vice Chairman Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee thank you for the opportunity to bring House Bill 71 before you and I would be happy to attempt to answer any questions the committee may have at this time.

