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Sarah Fowler Arthur State Representative

Sponsor Testimony HB 239 – Replica Motor Vehicle License and Title

Chairman McClain, Vice-Chair Dobos, Ranking Member Grim, and members of the House Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 239, creating the Replica Motor Vehicle License and Titling Process. This bill was introduced in each of the past four general assemblies and affects Ohio's vintage car enthusiasts. I reintroduced it (***again!***) because current law continues to hassle a constituent in my district who builds and drives replica vehicles for parades, car shows, and exhibitions. I would like to thank Representative Dean for joining me in this effort and Representative Bill Sietz for co-sponsoring every edition of the bill!

Additionally, federal law changes over the past seven years and updated federal regulations which went into effect nearly four years ago, now allow hobbyists to buy a turn-key replica vehicle from a kit manufacturer or to build their own replica vehicle that is at least 25 model years old.

Ohio law currently does not differentiate between a vintage vehicle and a replica vehicle. Ohio should modernize our laws to accommodate the unique needs of our replica car enthusiasts and to enable them to fully enjoy the process of creating a replica vehicle and sharing it with others.

The titling and licensing processes laid out in HB 239 ensure that qualifying vehicles are at least 25 model years old, have been verified as a "replica" vehicle by a historical car expert, and receive a vehicle safety inspection from the State Highway Patrol. The new federal laws require replica cars to meet certain equipment safety standards and modern emission standards and HB 239 also requires an inspection and signed statement of safety to operate on public roads and highways. The owner must also sign an affidavit that the vehicle will not be used for general transportation but only for clubs, exhibitions, tours, parades, and similar activities.

Once the requirements have been met the Clerk would be able to title the vehicle as a "replica" and the owner could receive a license plate designating the vehicle as a replica for the specified model year (rather than current law which designates the vehicle model year as the year it was built). In other words, HB 239 allows a 1965 Cobra to be built by a replica car enthusiast in 2022 to be titled and licensed as a "***replica*** 1965 Cobra" rather than a 2022 Cobra in a 1965 style. A replica designation on both the title and license, ensures that potential replica car buyers clearly understand the age of the vehicle they are purchasing, something which may be lost in transition from a state with a replica titling process if purchased in Ohio without a replica titling process.

Automobiles from the past allow people to connect with and preserve our history in a tangible way. As the birth state of leading car developers, including Ransom E Olds (Geneva, Ohio), the Packard Brothers (Warren, Ohio), and Thomas Alva Edison (Milan, Ohio), we should encourage these connections and pass a common sense provision allowing replica vehicles to be appropriately titled, inspected and licensed.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope the committee will break the cycle of previous general assemblies and move forward with both additional hearings and a favorable report on HB 239!

Links for more information about the federal law changes to Replica Vehicles:

<https://carbuzz.com/news/turnkey-replicas-can-now-be-sold-in-the-us>

<https://www.semasan.com/legislative-alerts/national/new-federal-law-enables-hobbyists-purchase-turnkey-replica-cars>

<https://www.hagerty.com/media/news/replica-car-construction-can-officially-commence/#:~:text=Any%20replicas%20made%20and%20sold,process%20may%20take%20several%20months>