



Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

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Senate Bill 179
Written Proponent Testimony
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Chair McColley, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee, thank you for the opportunity to written proponent testimony today in support of Senate Bill 179, a bill to maintain Ohio's front license plate requirement.

As our partners in law enforcement know, and as they testified to during debate on House Bill 62 (Transportation Budget) last Spring, the front license plate is a critical tool in terms of both safety and criminal investigation.

As one example, for almost three years now, going back to the beginning of the 132nd General Assembly, the legislature has debated multiple bills to fix a variety of flaws in the criminal justice system that were discovered after the rape and murder of Reagan Tokes. Everything from indefinite sentencing, to GPS monitoring of offenders, to caseload standards for adult parole officers. This is an important debate and what should not go overlooked is that the front license plate played an instrumental role in solving the crime. The detective involved in that case were able to locate Miss Tokes' vehicle because a license plate reader captured an image of her front plate. Brian Golsby, the man eventually convicted of the crime, left DNA evidence in the car, evidence that he had already tried to destroy once. Law enforcement was ultimately able to locate him more quickly because of the front plate and evidence found in the car aided in his conviction.

Law enforcement across Ohio use the front license plate everyday as they serve warrants, recover stolen vehicles, search for missing and abducted children, and investigate everything from illegally passing a school bus, to domestic violence, to homicides. It is a critical tool for traffic stops that enable our law enforcement to disrupt a variety of criminal activity. To put it simply, the savings to the consumer in terms of eliminating the front license plate along with any aesthetic benefit of doing so are greatly outweighed by the risks to public safety of taking this tool away.

Thirty one other states and every other country in the world require both rear and front plates. No state has removed its front plate in 40 years. Removing the front plate is a step in the wrong direction for Ohio and will be damaging to efforts to promote public safety. We urge your favorable consideration of Senate Bill 179.