



## **Ohio Deputy Registrars' Association**

**Ohio House Transportation Committee  
HB 96 (Merrin) Permanent Trailer Plate  
WRITTEN Testimony  
May 11, 2021**

Chairman Baldrige and members of the House Transportation Committee, please accept this written testimony on HB 96 (Merrin) on behalf of the Ohio Deputy Registrars' Association (ODRA). Ohio currently has approximately 180 deputy registrar license agencies in the state, the majority of the license agencies are operated by independent contractors, who bid on these agencies through the BMV. These bids are based on historical transaction data provided by the BMV. Deputy registrars provide BMV services on behalf of the state, including driver's licenses, federal compliant Real IDs, vehicle registrations and renewals, and state identifications. Deputy registrars are proud of the service they provide to Ohioans, and are especially proud of the number of transactions our agencies were able to service once we were permitted to reopen by the state.

While we support the customer convenience offered in HB 96, the exclusion of the deputy registrar fee for the multiple years of the registration will have a negative impact on our agencies. There are 680,000 non-commercial trailer plates registered in Ohio. Since the permanent plate is optional, the deputy registrar fee should be included for all 8 years of the registration as are all the other state and local fees. Changes like this one to our market place have an immediate impact, since our fee and our service offering is limited by statute. Unlike other small businesses, we do not have the flexibility to expand our offerings or adjust our prices. Even if there is only a 10% rate of adoption, these are transactions that are loss, and we are unable to replace them with other revenue.

As you have heard from many small businesses in your communities, the pandemic had and continues to have a tremendous impact on deputy registrar locations. While we are grateful the state did provide CARES Act funding for existing agencies to help offset the increased costs incurred to help protect our employees and the public from the pandemic, the prolonged closure of our agencies, coupled with the push by the state to encourage the public to use the state on-line system has had a devastating impact. At this time, our agencies are experiencing an average of a 20% decrease in transactions through March of 2021 compared to the first three months of 2020. This does not address the loss of transactions while our agencies were closed during the shutdown. With the extension of the expiration dates for licenses and renewals, we are hopeful that some of the volume will return, but we won't be able to recoup those losses from 2020.

We would appreciate the Committee's consideration of including the deputy registrar free for all 8 years for the permanent plate option. Thank you for your consideration of this request.