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Chairman Ghanbari, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking member Liston and my colleagues on the House Homeland Security Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on HB 194, which will create an innovative, consumer optional vendor license plate program and generate additional revenue to both the state and participating organizations.

For decades, personalized and specialty license plates have been a popular accessory for American drivers. Today, it is estimated that between 15-20 million American's have personalized or specialty plates on their vehicles.

This legislation is modeled on a successful program first launched in Texas some 13 years ago. It is a public/private partnership which has generated for Texas 600,000 additional specialty and/or personalized plate sales generating more than $120 million to the state's general revenue fund. Notably, the program operates without any cost to the state or corresponding agencies.

Here is what the legislation does:

- It requires the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to contract with a private vendor through a competitive bidding process for the right to design, market and sell specialty license plates.

- It permits the private vendor to enter into agreements with organizations wishing to sponsor specialty license plates.

- It allows the vendor to design specialty plates but requires the plates to meet all the state's specifications and standards, the Registrar may reject a plate design and the Registrar may consult with the highway patrol on safety, reflectivity, and readability.

The program will not have any impact on existing fees collected and will not impact any existing specialty plate.

As you know, currently the only way a new specialty plate can be created is through legislation. While we will still be able to create plates with legislation, this will provide organizations and individuals with another option for seeking to create a specialty plate.

The bottom line is that the benefits to the state are many:

The vendor does all the work; consumers and the state reap the benefits. The vendor designs, markets and sells attractive new specialty plate designs, streamlines, and modernizes the

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shopping and purchasing experience, and provides consumers with greater choice while driving new revenue for the state.

The legislation mandates that a portion of the fees collected are dispersed into the drug law enforcement fund, which awards grants to drug task forces throughout the state.

The private vendor program will function at no cost to the state as the program is fully funded by the private vendor, with services including but not limited to: Marketing and advertising; modern website design, hosting and implementation, and exceptional dedicated multi-lingual customer service via Voice, Click-to-Chat, Email and social media.

The program is purely voluntary for citizens, creating no new fees or taxes for those who choose not to participate. The legislation authorizes the Registrar to set permissible fees for taxpayers who choose to opt into the new program. The fees created under this new program fall only on taxpayers who choose to participate. No other taxpayers are affected.

Chairman Ghanbari, thank you again for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on HB 194. I am more than happy to take any questions the committee may have.