
HOUSE BILL 1368

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Herrera, Eddy, Haler, Takko, Orcutt, Van De Wege, Smith, Short, Bailey, Condotta, Warnick, Goodman, Kretz, Johnson, Ross, Newhouse, Shea, Pearson, Hasegawa, Rolfes, Sells, Kristiansen, Schmick, Carlyle, McCune, Springer, Kessler, Driscoll, Moeller, Kelley, Probst, and Roach

Read first time 01/20/09. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to the requirement to periodically replace license
2 plates; and reenacting and amending RCW 46.16.233.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.16.233 and 2003 c 361 s 501 and 2003 c 196 s 401
5 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

6 (1) Except for those license plates issued under RCW 46.16.305(1)
7 before January 1, 1987, under RCW 46.16.305(3), and to commercial
8 vehicles with a gross weight in excess of twenty-six thousand pounds,
9 effective with vehicle registrations due or to become due on January 1,
10 2001, the appearance of the background of all vehicle license plates
11 may vary in color and design but must be legible and clearly
12 identifiable as a Washington state license plate, as designated by the
13 department.

14 ~~((Additionally,))~~ (2) To ensure maximum legibility and
15 reflectivity, the department ~~((shall periodically provide for the~~
16 ~~replacement of license plates))~~ may replace license plates upon request
17 of the current vehicle owner if the functional lifetime of the plates
18 has been exceeded, except for commercial vehicles with a gross weight
19 in excess of twenty-six thousand pounds. ~~((Frequency of replacement~~

1 ~~shall~~) The department shall not require the replacement of license
2 plates at other times. The functional lifetime of a license plate must
3 be established in accordance with empirical studies documenting the
4 longevity of the reflective materials used to make license plates.

5 ~~((+2))~~ (3) The department may, upon the transfer of a vehicle,
6 require the new vehicle owner to replace the license plates at the same
7 time the new owner registers the vehicle if the vehicle's existing
8 license plates have exceeded their functional lifetime.

9 (4) Special license plate series approved by the special license
10 plate review board created under RCW 46.16.705 and enacted by the
11 legislature may display a symbol or artwork approved by the special
12 license plate review board.

13 ~~((+3))~~ (5) By November 1, 2003, in providing for the periodic
14 replacement of license plates, the department shall offer to vehicle
15 owners the option of retaining their current license plate numbers.
16 The department shall charge a retention fee of twenty dollars if this
17 option is exercised. Revenue generated from the retention fee must be
18 deposited into the multimodal transportation account.

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