



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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ANTIQUE CAR YR. OF MFR. LICENSE PLATES

House Bill 4711 as enrolled
Second Analysis (12-14-87)

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MAR 30 1988

Sponsor: Rep. Donald Van Singe
Committee: Transportation

Mich. State Law Library

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Under current law, owners of historic vehicles (a vehicle over 25 years old, used solely as a collector's item to participate in parades, club activities, exhibitions and similar uses) may obtain a permanent historic registration plate for a fee of \$10. However, many owners feel that the secretary of state's plates do not enhance the look of antiquity of their vehicles. Therefore, antique car owners would like to be able to use authentic antique registration plates which would fit with the "antique look" of their cars.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to allow owners of historical vehicles to use authentic historical plates instead of historic vehicle registration plates. Under the bill the secretary of state could issue registration tabs to owners of historic vehicles who possess authentic Michigan registration plates of the same year as the year in which their vehicle was manufactured. The tabs would have to be adhesive and attached to the authentic plate. Further, owners of historic vehicles could purchase authentic plates from another person in order to use them on historic vehicles.

The fee for historic vehicle plates would remain at \$10, and the fee for registration tabs would also be \$10. In addition, the bill would provide that owners of historical vehicles who used authentic historical plates would have to fulfill the same certification and safety requirements that owners of historical vehicles currently follow. A registration issued under the bill would expire on April 15 in the fifth year following the date of issuance. Registration for historical vehicles registered before April 15, 1988 would expire on April 15, 1993. The secretary of state could revoke registration if a historical vehicle was used for purposes other than those allowed by law or if the vehicle was not safe to operate on highways.

The bill would take effect April 15, 1988.

MCL 257.803a

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

According to the secretary of state, the fiscal implications of the bill to the state cannot be determined because there are no available estimates of how many owners would actually use authentic plates.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill is desirable because it gives historic vehicle owners the freedom to use their own authentic plates which bear the same year as the model of the car. Thus, the authentic look of the car would be enhanced and the value of car could be increased because of the addition of the authentic plate.

Against:

The bill is unnecessary and costly to the state. If historic vehicle owners want to use authentic license plates they can put the plates on the front of their vehicle. The bill would double costs for the state by forcing the secretary of state's office to establish special procedures for the processing of authentic plates. The state incurs enough costs as it is without having to provide additional services for special interest groups.

Response: The secretary of state's offices currently process approximately 1,000 historic plates per year. Hypothetically, if the bill passed and 1,000 additional people registered authentic plates, processing costs would be approximately \$3,000. Thus, the costs to the state for implementation would be negligible.

Against:

As the bill is currently written it is conceivable that registration could be duplicated. For approximately the past ten years the state has issued only one license plate. However, before this procedure was initiated two plates were issued. Therefore, it is possible that a historic vehicle owner who legally purchased an authentic historic plate could use the duplicate of a plate already legally in use. Thus, if one of the owners of the plates was stopped by a police officer for a traffic violation, confusion (to say the least) could result.

Response: Duplication of plates is a serious concern but one that is unwarranted in this instance. The number of present registrants of historic vehicles is so low that the possibility of plate duplication is almost zero.

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