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# PUBLIC HEARING

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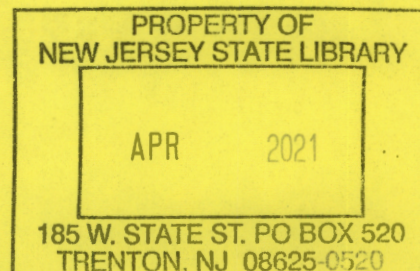
## SENATE LAW, PUBLIC SAFETY AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE

A Discussion of Issues Concerning the Restructuring  
of Motor Vehicle License Plates  
and the Misuse of Drivers' Licenses

July 21, 1987  
New Jersey Institute  
of Technology  
Newark, New Jersey

### MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Senator Frank X, Graves, Jr., Chairman  
Senator Ronald L. Rice  
Senator C. Louis Bassano  
Senator Joseph Bubba



### ALSO PRESENT:

Aggie Szilagyi  
Office of Legislative Services  
Aide, Senate Law, Public Safety and Defense Committee

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Hearing Recorded and Transcribed by  
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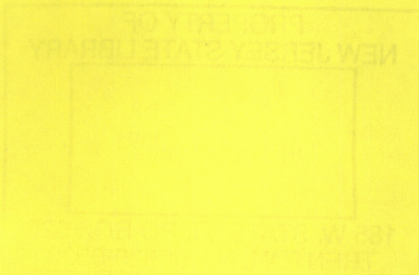


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of Motor Vehicle License Plates  
and the Manner of Issuing Licenses

July 21, 1987  
New Jersey State  
of Technology  
New Jersey



MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT

Senator Frank X. Graves, Jr.  
Senator Ronald L. Rice  
Senator C. Louis Bassano  
Senator Joseph Blasi

ALSO PRESENT:

Agnes Salivsky  
Office of Legislative Services  
Aide to the Law, Public Safety and Defense Committee

Hearing Room  
Office of the  
Public Safety and Defense Committee

State of New Jersey  
On July 21, 1987  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625



## New Jersey State Legislature

**TANK X. GRAVES, JR.**  
*Chairman*  
**PAUL CONTILLO**  
*Vice-Chairman*  
**RONALD L. RICE**  
**C. LOUIS BASSANO**  
**JOSEPH BUBBA**

### SENATE LAW, PUBLIC SAFETY AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE

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TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625  
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July 10, 1987

## NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

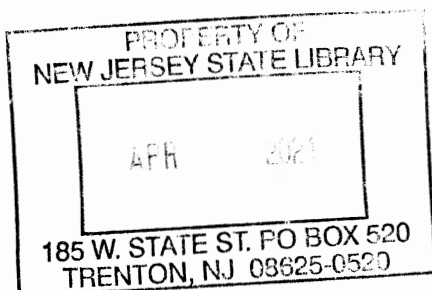
The SENATE LAW, PUBLIC SAFETY AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, July 21, 1987 at 10:00 a.m. in the 1st floor seminar room of the Wilson Alumni Center of the New Jersey Institute of Technology, 150 Bleeker Street, Newark, New Jersey.

The purpose of this public hearing is to receive testimony and to discuss issues concerning the restructuring of motor vehicle license plates and the misuse of drivers' licenses.

Specifically, the committee will discuss the reflectorization and color of license plates, and the combination of numbers and letters which are used on the plates for identification.

In addition, the committee will discuss how fraudulent motor vehicle drivers' licenses are made, obtained and used especially by persons under the legal age to purchase and consume alcoholic beverages. On this issue, the committee will consider Senate Bills 3354 and 3355, both sponsored by Senator Graves.

Anyone who would like to testify or anyone who needs directions to the meeting place should contact Aggie Szilagyi, Committee Aide, at (609) 984-0231.







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SENATOR FRANK X. GRAVES, JR. (Chairman): The hearing will officially start. The purpose of this meeting is to find out number one, what happened to legislation passed a number of years ago, directing the State of New Jersey to provide reflectorized license plates; why it hasn't been implemented, and is there still strong meaningfulness in having it done? In other words, is the situation even more prevailing as of today than it was a number of years ago when original studies were made for it? To put to rest once and for all, the very frightening information that all Governors' offices -- including this one -- give when they talk about the cost, and take into consideration, what must and should prevail, the safety factor. So, do we need a new license plate in New Jersey? If we do, what should we adopt as the official license plate?

Subject number two is drivers' licenses. A number of years ago, with solid support from Colonel Pagano and Attorney Generals at that time, New Jersey finally adopted a photo driver's license. New Jersey undoubtedly made a very good move, in that it prevailed upon -- I believe it was Sears Roebuck if memory serves me right -- that a retail store, situated throughout the State, would be prevailed upon to offer our constituency the tremendous convenience of being able to obtain a photo driver's license. Then we know the political fortunes prevailed in the program, which was good in my estimation. It completely failed because of politics.

But then other things started to surface. We saw in a local state newspaper that there was a great deal of false identification prevailing within the photo driver's license which New Jersey had adopted. I personally saw approximately 20 photo drivers' licenses that had been so prevailed upon that most of them upon first look -- unless you could sharply and keenly detect it's false -- presents itself as a legitimate, good driver's license. Now if 48 states in our country can

provide with no problems to its constituency, a photo driver's license, why can't New Jersey do it?

I then passed legislation -- because we didn't want to inconvenience our public -- that only the initial driver's license would mandatorily have to be a photo driver's license -- that you would get initially in this State -- to take the so-called pressure off, because the Division of Motor Vehicles completely failed its responsibility; even though it had two and a half years workup notice for providing the photo drivers' licenses. I still believe that a photo driver's license, done properly, is something that will be acceptable by the public. I realize the editorial of the leading newspaper of the State, aggressively fought this. But nonetheless, I still feel that with today's world, so to speak, as it presents itself -- with problems of ripoffs, false identification, eager to snatch a purse -- that driver's license gave our constituency a certain accommodation that presented itself when they were trying to say they wanted to cash this check, or they were this person. In fact, not even looking at it from the other point of view, from a law enforcement officer's point of view, I think it's 100% in need, and I think it borders 60% on just being serviced properly. So, from a law enforcement point of view it's 100% needed. From a constituency point of view I think it's well past the 50% mark.

So what we're going to try to do is that this Committee is eagerly going to look into those two facets of government. And we'll first take the license plates. Is the Director of Motor Vehicles here?

C O L O N E L C L I N T O N L. P A G A N O: No sir, he is not. He will be here.

SENATOR GRAVES: Not that Colonel Pagano should go second, but he had presented so much information, that I wanted him to outline what he has forwarded to the five members of the Committee. But Colonel Pagano, to save time and expedite-- Our



delight that you're here to point out how you feel about this-- Would you please come up and address the two problems, first the license plates, then your feelings on the drivers' licenses?

COLONEL PAGANO: Senator Graves, also--

SENATOR GRAVES: Do you have any sample license plates with you, Colonel, or any members of your staff?

COLONEL PAGANO: We have people here who do.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay.

COLONEL PAGANO: Just by way of background, Senator. We have people representing the New Jersey Chiefs, Lieutenant Dileo from Bridgewater represents the Chiefs. We have Chief Parenti of Fanwood, who represents a variety of interests. Chief Parenti is the President, Chairman, Director -- whatever you are, Anthony -- of the New Jersey Traffic Officers Association, and also has been on the Highway and Traffic Safety Committee of the International, and the Traffic Safety Committee of the New Jersey Chiefs. So, between the groups I think we have the material that you've been asking for in both areas. But I don't think that either Lieutenant Dileo or Chief Parenti have had an opportunity to sign the sheet. Or have you? (affirmative response) Okay.

If you will, Senator, I have a written statement that I will ask one of my people to distribute to the members of the Committee, and leave the remainder for any interested party that may have need of them.

There are two issues, as we see it, as far as license plates are concerned, and I think we ought to start with license plates. Going back to our first presentation many years ago -- prior to the legislation that you're trying to determine what happened to -- we spoke in terms of reflectorization alone as a safety and a visibility program. That of course was adopted by the Legislature, with some reservation as to funding and implementation. Since that time

we now find New Jersey as the only state in the nation that does not have a reflectorized license plate.

During the course of the passage of time, while we were going forward ostensibly to implement reflectorization, we found ourselves faced with an entirely new license plate that brings a second issue into the mix, not just the safety issue, but readability. We now have the buff on blue plate, which by virtue of all the conversation you're going to hear today, is not an acceptable color combination as far as the visibility of a license plate is concerned. I don't want to speak for those behind me who will be speaking, but I think that in the conversation that we've had -- because we've all intermixed in committee work -- what you find is that we are unanimous in that particular area. We can't read that license plate. There must be a change in color.

Again by way of background, when you get down to the two issues: color and readability -- color and readability and safety -- we come right back to the basic arguments that we furthered very early on. The argument being that reflectorization is probably the cheapest investment -- highway safety, or safety investment -- that any motorist or state will every make. Dependent upon what this Committee or the Legislature, and/or the Governor, finally decide to be a payment scheme, without question, reflectorization offers a safety factor on the highways of this State, and it is a safety factor that also lends itself to visibility.

One concept that I think has got to be accepted, and accepted very early on, is that license plates are vehicle identification numbers for the public, and for law enforcement. They're a tool. They're not doilies on cars. They are there for the purpose of identifying that car. To the citizen who's been the victim of crime, to the citizen who wants to report any sort of improper activity to the police, that number is there to identify a car. All too often I think



we concern ourselves with the fact that the license plate ought to compliment the personality of the individual, or ought to compliment the color of the car, or whatever; but that's not what the license plate is there for. The license plate is a vehicle identification number.

I know that you haven't touched on it yet, but you're also going to be considering the one and two plate scheme of functioning. Our position is clearly that the majority of all identifications are made from the front, not from the rear. And to lose that front license plate would be a major loss, both to the public, and to law enforcement.

But license plates are there for the purpose of identifying cars. We have been studying this issue. The first study that I was involved in was in 1979. Working with the International Chiefs, I chaired a committee that represented law enforcement throughout this nation. We came up, basically, with the findings that we presented to you. And I think at this point in time, when you speak in terms of study -- both national study and state study -- we studied the issue to death. The second study was in 1984 chaired by Chief Parenti, and I think he'll go into that later, but we come up really with a common finding each and every time. Without question we have been consistent on the recommendations that we've been making.

There are other factors, I think, that ought to be involved, and they are contained in the presentation that I have just passed around. There is the issue of a policeman's safety. A policeman in today's market -- more than ever before I think -- has become a target out on the highways. The fact that we've developed procedures that require them before confronting a motorist to call that number in, and see that that number is documented, becomes of vital importance to people in my position, and certainly anyone else who is interested in the safety of a policeman out on the highway. If

the policeman can't see that license plate, see it properly, when he's making misidentifications because of the color or readability of that plate, it does without question affect the safety of that officer; and I think that's a major concern that we've got.

I'm trying to skip through this presentation, if I may, but the position that I've taken, and the position that my Division has taken, is shared essentially by every major association in law enforcement in this nation today. With the exception of the State of New Jersey, we have seen our way through to a reasonable identification plate in every state but New Jersey.

I'd like to point out, if I may too, in going to the issue of reflectorization, the importance -- not just of readability -- but the importance of the safety factor in that particular area. There are studies that are referred to in the presentation that I've made; there are studies that have been looked upon as standards in this nation for a long long time, all of which reflect the fact that that plate that's reflectorized is probably one of the best safety devices that we can place on any automobile, on any highway.

I can think of two areas where studies become very important: One is the automobile parked along a highway at night without lights, where the license plate after the standard reflectorization in the rear taillights is faded -- and that I think is a pretty commonly accepted fact; the reflectorized taillights in a car fade after a number of years, but that reflectorized license plate does not fade, and the motorist who's coming down a super highway, generally at a reasonably high speed -- 55 I would hope, but probably higher -- is confronted with a car that's either halfway on the road, or too close to the roadway. The rear end collision factor is very prevalent. In that setting, the reflectorized plate by study has shown to be absolutely essential.



The other area, that I think is probably the most critical area, is the area where we have a vehicle coming head-on a lonely country road -- and most of our accidents in this State are on rural roads -- at night, one light out, trying to figure out whether you're coming upon a motorcycle, or an automobile that's over in your lane across that center line, or over in the right lane; and that reflectorized plate places that car in perspective for the oncoming motorist. And in that head-on collision situation, there's no doubt in my mind that that reflectorized plate is absolutely vital, and an absolute tool as far as highway safety is concerned.

So we're speaking in the license plate area of selecting a color that will reasonably meet the needs of what this State has by way of a particular identification, and reflectorizing that license plate.

SENATOR GRAVES: The sum total then is that-- I get from your outline that we have the unsafest license plate in the country?

COLONEL PAGANO: We are the only remaining State without reflectorized licensing.

SENATOR GRAVES: And the second part of it is that we have one that even in daytime is not as readable as other states?

COLONEL PAGANO: It is not. It is not readable to our people.

SENATOR GRAVES: Right.

COLONEL PAGANO: The license plate that was recommended to the then sitting Governor, is not the license plate that came back; although that Governor made it very clear that he was really not in favor of the cost involved in reflectorization. At that time -- if I recall correctly, we had 14 states that were not reflectorized. We go, as we do in all of these situations, with the decision making of the chief executive. But we were not given back the color that had been

recommended, which essentially was again a continuation of the plate that we used in New Jersey for 20 years successfully.

SENATOR GRAVES: Well then basically, we're running the same parallel line; that New Jersey is not only overdue for a new license plate, but what is presently constituted as the license plate, does not serve the purpose for what its intention was, and also does not serve another important purpose. A reflectorized plate could save a whole family from being wiped out in a car.

While you're at the chair, could we impose upon you for your thoughts on the photo driver's license, so that we don't have to bounce you back up again?

COLONEL PAGANO: Certainly. My feeling on the photo driver's license hasn't changed one iota. I think it's a good form of identification. There obviously -- as you have pointed out -- have been a number of problems as far as implementing the photo driver's license is concerned. And I think I have people here today that can portray for you some problems in duplicating photo drivers' licenses. We only received a call from Aggie late yesterday afternoon, but the material that we have is well-known in law enforcement and we can portray that to you. But the bulk of what we're concerning ourselves with are not issues that can't be overcome, either by procedure -- which we're talking to the Division of Motor Vehicles about -- or for that matter, not something that really wasn't expected or the technology itself won't cure at some point in the future. There are many different ways of working around the photo driver's license.

Our position, as a Division, is still to support the photo driver's license. Understanding the difficulties that we've had in the Division of Motor Vehicles with some of their processes, and some of that restructuring that's going on, the option that is currently there -- either to permit the motorist to have a photo DL, or to have that motorist have a regular

standard format DL -- is acceptable to us. We can work with either one. Most desirable, I think is still the photo DL.

Given the changes that I think we're working on now-- Part of what the Attorney General is doing in putting together the restructuring of the Division of Motor Vehicles, is to bring the interested parties in and given them an opportunity to describe to the motor vehicle people the problems that particular group of people may have. In our case, of course, law enforcement. We have a group that is acting in an advisory capacity -- we call them our target groups -- that will recommend to the Director those changes and those problem areas where we're seeing difficulties out on the streets and on the roadways. One of which of course is the counterfeiting of drivers' licenses, altering of drivers' licenses, and probably the most common problem we see with the photo DL is using the identification of another person and having your picture put on someone else's driver's license -- which I know we'll cure by virtue of procedure, because what you do there is not let that particular license be issued the way it's currently being issued. We'll be making some recommendations for change.

SENATOR GRAVES: Colonel, have you met with any of the Governor's staff about the budgeting for the new license plates at all?

COLONEL PAGANO: No, I have not. I've been working since the legislation, essentially with members of the Legislature and the Attorney General.

SENATOR GRAVES: Your intense study of this that dates back to 1979 at least, at minimal, is-- What color would you recommend that New Jersey license plates be, that would give best distinguish to both law enforcement--

COLONEL PAGANO: One problem we have -- and I think this is a real problem -- is the number of license plates that conceivably could be on the highway at a given time. Conceivably we could have three license plates, of three

different colors on the highway, and I don't that this really is a viable way to go. I think probably the best that I could suggest would be to go back to the buff and black -- have two plates on the highway for a period of time, and continue your series with the buff and black, avoid duplication in the series. The buff and black -- cream and black, whatever you call it--

SENATOR GRAVES: As reflectorized?

COLONEL PAGANO: And reflectorize it, is traditionally recognized as the New Jersey license plate.

SENATOR GRAVES: One thing that I've noticed on the highways is, it's starting to get confusing. I don't know if it's only my mind that works that way, or others do too. I think we've grown used to, and we can remember three letters and three numbers. But now the State is putting out three letters, two numbers, and a letter. I don't think the average person can remember those combinations, especially if that vehicle was something they wanted to turn over to law enforcement. I think even the telephone company's got away from it. I can remember the telephone numbers used to be like, Mulberry 4-7000. The telephone company has also gotten away from that, and strictly uses numbers without any other combination going into it. In other words, instead of saying "Mulberry" they say 684 now, or something like that. I have got to believe it's somewhat confusing when you wind up with four letters and two numbers, and probably within the next year we're going to pick up five letters and one number. So unless we bite the bullet on this, there's going to be a lot of crimes committed with vehicles that are not going to be able to be properly reported, or properly ascertained as to who the owner of that vehicle is. So do you have any thoughts on your study from 1979 about -- the plate should stay the same size and--

COLONEL PAGANO: The license plate size is determined by a national standard. The AAMVA standard has been adopted by



all the manufacturers, and it has been imposed upon all imports coming into this nation. So the size of a license plate is a standard size.

The most desirable configuration is a combination of numbers and letters, and/or letters and number. However, when you look upon the background of what's occurred here in New Jersey, when you look upon the growth of the system, you find yourself in a situation of trying to reach a compromise; and I know that Ben Franklin said that, "neither the fortress nor the virgin will stand once you begin to negotiate," but I think we've got to look at some form of negotiation here, and come up with a combination of numbers and letters in whatever form that is most acceptable, not losing sight of the color and reflectorization. The most desirable may not be possible if you want to avoid duplicating that same number, same letter, on the highway at the same time. That may be problematic. So, all the studies have shown three letters/three numbers most desirable. What you can do with the size of the license plate that we currently have is on that particular plate size, raise the size of the numbers and letters somewhat to make them more readable. Even with reflectorization that's a help.

SENATOR GRAVES: So I get from your testimony that we should impress on the Division of Motor Vehicles to emphasize the clarity of the numbers, and not try to get designs on the license plate to minimize the numbers and start talking about fish hooks and the Statue of Liberty or something like that.

COLONEL PAGANO: Right. I understand the need of the State as far as promoting tourism, promoting the image of the State. I think that's really something that in many other areas is a desirable goal. But I don't think it's something that belongs on a license plate. And all the studies that we've conducted say, keep it clean. And I'm sure that that is the kind of testimony that you're going to get from the people who are going to succeed me at this platform. Keep it clean. Keep it as clear as you can. Avoid the doily effect.

SENATOR GRAVES: I'd like to give Senator Rice and Senator Bassano-- Senator Rice?

SENATOR RICE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Colonel, I haven't heard anything that you said that I would disagree with. I think I'm one who can always find reason to disagree, but I think my background in this city as a law enforcement officer -- former police officer, former detective -- and my experience in academics and the criminal justice system tell me you're 100% correct. I'm glad to hear you say the things you said because I thought I was getting old in this job. I'm starting to get so I can't read license plates any more. I thought it was just my glasses and me.

COLONEL PAGANO: The truth of the matter, Senator, is that especially in that center city area, you where you have corners that are being turned and no straightaways of any great consequence, you may only have a moment for a citizen or a law enforcement officer to see that plate. That's where readability becomes vital.

SENATOR RICE: Well, you're correct, and some of the concerns that I do have throughout the whole state -- regardless of whether it's a city like Newark, or Irvington, Paterson, Passaic, anyplace else -- is that there's been, as you well know, a tremendous amount of crime. But some of that crime is just a theft of motor vehicles, period. I know that our police departments ride around with hot sheets, and hit lists, and everything else, but it's very difficult at times to pick up those plates, like you say. In some of our cities, like Newark, we don't give chase any more unless we have certain kinds of causes, which means that once that vehicle gets at a distance, it is not readable at all. It is not even read when you get close, and the closer you get to a vehicle to have to read it, the greater you enhance and increase the possibility of an accident, and then jeopardize people's lives and property.

I would have a question or two. Let me just say also about the licenses to the Chairman and those listening. Once again, coming from a law enforcement background, I don't think the picture-- I think -- what you said -- it's the process, because even before they attach pictures, Mr. Chairman, there were folks running around Newark and this state with drivers' licenses. There was a problem at the local motor vehicle here where there were constant thefts, if you recall, of drivers' licenses, and people selling them in the streets, etc. Whether a picture is attached or not, it's the document itself that the problem is with, and that's the process. I think that states like Virginia and others, who encourage and have those systems that work very effectively, we need to take a look at those kinds of things they're doing to make it work. We're going to stumble at first, but I think it's important.

As related to the color, my question is -- and I think you kind of got to it when you did say, "recognized State color." I would be concerned about the control of colors, because my experience as a law enforcement officer, I see green and white plates, and I see red and white plates. And at one time I would say, "Well, red and white plates, North Carolina maybe, or South Carolina." Then I got totally confused because I would see the same colors and it's coming out of Georgia, or Florida someplace. So I would get the digits, but I couldn't relate it to the plate. And then as a law enforcement person, when I make the wrong assumption that it's the North Carolina plate, there are two possibilities -- maybe others too. One possibility, that I wouldn't get a hit on the plate. The other possibility that I may get a hit, and then all of a sudden I'm wound up in all kinds of litigation because I'm bringing the wrong person back to be identified. I'm accused of false arrest, and the whole slew of things that come with that. So, I would be concerned about colors. I do think that it has to be reflectorized.

The question I have for you though, is related, as the Chairman said, to the numbers. I don't profess to know everything, and maybe I should know a little bit more about Social Security numbers, but I don't. My question is -- maybe you know, or maybe it can be researched, Mr. Chairman -- are there any digits-- I know that my 150, the first three characters of that number, is assigned to other people. It has something to do with the time and period you applied to the jurisdiction, or something like that. I'm not certain, the middle numbers 34, or the last four numbers-- If the last four numbers are fixed -- that they're never assigned to anyone else -- then it seems to me that's a probability of a way to look at a license plate number. I mean if 1934 in a Social Security number never goes to anyone else, then it's obvious it becomes Ron Rice's plate, and that number follows me, etc. Maybe that's an area that we should look at. If the numbers are used otherwise, then it's not the way to go.

COLONEL PAGANO: We at one time, when the volume was not as great as it is right now, had a letter designation that referred to the county of origin. We've long since gone beyond that. We're now in a situation, because of the number of registrations in the State, are not in a position to do that any longer. The difficulty that you allude to though, is a real difficulty. It moves you away from the most desirable configuration of three numbers/three letters, into a combination situation as described by Senator Graves, where we've got to address ourselves to avoid the duplication -- having the same plate on two cars -- or what might be up to a three or four year period of phasing in a new plate. That lends itself really to a more of a scrambling, probably three numbers/two letters/and a number, or vice versa, three letters/two numbers/and a letter; a different configuration. It's not the most desirable, but certainly far more desirable than what we have on the highway right now -- license plates you can't see. And it doesn't have a safety factor attached.



SENATOR RICE: Well that's why my question is -- and I don't know if anyone here could answer it. Are any of the numbers of a social security number not assigned to anyone else?

COLONEL PAGANO: I don't know that would be a configuration that you could bleed into a license plate plan. I would doubt it because the social security number is a long number, as you know.

SENATOR RICE: No, no. You're missing my point I believe. My point is that, my social security number -- 150-34-1934 -- that's my assigned number. I wouldn't look to put the 150 in, because the 150 is assigned to many many people. I'm not sure if the 34 is assigned to anyone else, and I'm not sure if the 1934 is assigned to anyone else. What I'm raising here -- and it's something we need to research -- is whether or not if the 150 is assigned to someone for whatever reason, the 34 is assigned, but the 1934 is never assigned to anyone, that's a part of me. Then it seems to me that the 1934 can become a plate number, I don't know. It just seems to me that all those characters cannot be reassigned; something needs to be fixed, if the number only applies to me the rest of my life. So maybe it's an area we need to research to see if in fact there is something that we can pull off. If the 34 for example is just the fixed number assigned, then maybe we can look at 150-34, recognize that the 150 puts us maybe in the jurisdiction or time frame etc., but the 34 would have meaning. So we need to maybe take a look, because it seems to me that much of what we're doing today, is move toward the area of social security numbers. And like you said, the configuration of such an extensive number will be too much for a plate, but maybe some aspect of that number can identify Ron Rice as the owner of that vehicle or that registration. And that's the issue I'm raising, and I guess I would have to assume that you're not sure.

COLONEL PAGANO: And truthfully, Senator, I don't think I can answer that question. My instincts would tell me though that you couldn't do that. There are many many people with the same prefixes, the same year, in a social security setting, but with a registration number you have to avoid duplication at all costs. I just can't answer the question.

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chairman, through the Chair, is it possible we could have our staff raise the question? I'm not sure if it's clear in the Colonel's mind what I am raising.

SENATOR GRAVES: I just told her. (referring to Committee Aide) We're going to look into what you said. Senator Bassano?

SENATOR BASSANO: Yes, Mr. Chairman. A couple of questions, Colonel. You may recall years back we used to have a little metal plate that we used to attach with the year on the license plate.

COLONEL PAGANO: A validation plate, right.

SENATOR BASSANO: Validation of registration. Has any thought been given to going back to that practice to make it easier on law enforcement to tell whether a car has in fact paid for the new registration, instead of walking around to also check the sticker on the window.

COLONEL PAGANO: What we found, really, is that particular validation was not that critical to begin with, and that it was just as easy to relate to the inspection sticker as a validation device. The license plate, once it was no longer issued on a yearly basis, and it was a permanent license plate, really was a license plate that didn't lend itself to a yearly sticker. We rely, if you will, from a front identification and that inspection sticker as a validation device.

SENATOR BASSANO: The second comment that I have is more of a comment than a question. In fact that's what it is. It's with regard to the statement you made earlier about increasing the size of the letter and the numeral designation

on the plates. I certainly think that is something that definitely deserves consideration, with an idea toward possibly dropping the logo of "The Garden State" to make that possible. Also getting away from the logo "New Jersey," maybe just getting back to the "NJ" and leaving it so that it's a very simple type plate, with no logo of any type, and no designation of the Garden State in any way. Not that I am against advertising and promoting the Garden State. It's just that the -- as you stated earlier -- the purpose of the plate is for law enforcement, and that's what this Committee should be looking at. What's the most practical solution for law enforcement in utilizing that license plate, even when it comes to color? I certainly intend to support that sitting up here.

SENATOR GRAVES: I didn't get your final line. You said what?

SENATOR BASSANO: I said that the Colonel's given us some good comments, and I'd like to follow his recommendations. Basically that's what I said.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, the Director of Motor Vehicles? (Chairman is told that Mr. Paulsen is outside hearing room) In fairness, would you ask him to please come in to what the purpose of this meeting is called for? The Director of Motor Vehicles would you please come to the meeting? We've been sitting here for an hour waiting for you.

Good morning, Mr. Director.

G L E N N R. P A U L S E N: Good morning.

SENATOR GRAVES: The testimony of the Colonel was very pertinent to why I called this meeting. He's pointed out, very dramatically, that the present license plate of New Jersey -- as the Chairman of this Committee wholeheartedly supports his outline -- has totally been beat to death in conversations and should be buried once and for all. New Jersey is lagging far behind in having reflectorized license plates which serve not only the law enforcement world, but people themselves. Also

the safety factor of reflectorizing, on a highway when your taillights might be out, when you've lost the ability to have your motor run, and you're pulling over to the side-- There are so many hundreds of reasons, and not one valid reason -- because even the one on the financial part I think we'll be able to blow apart before we leave this auditorium this morning or this afternoon.

Also the background -- that I'm thankful that you sent me and all members of this Committee. I sort of interpret that the legislators said a number of years ago that we should have a new license plate. And that the budget process has been talked into over a period of time, putting directly into the budget, saying, "No not this year" or "We will not fund." I think we've missed whoever's been going to the Appropriations Committee and sponsoring such moves -- I think has been forgetting the Law and Public Safety factor of it. So, the sum total of the Colonel's testimony, in fairness to you -- I'm sure your staff has brought you up-to-date on it -- is that we're out of touch with reality, that we have a plate that doesn't communicate what it should be doing -- whether it be safety or clarification.

I, as the Chairman, say we are digging ourselves deeper each day into solving this problem, by putting out three letters, two numbers, and another letter. That combination is going to completely give our constituency the lack of ability of remembering what he's trying to remember from a second identification of that license plate. The more letters, and the combination of numbers are getting so that they won't be able to remember it. I think we're all trained for many years to the three numbers and three letters, but I don't think we're going to be able to change overnight. Nor do I think even a new person coming into the mainstream of identifying, whether they be law enforcement officers or whether they be the public itself-- This combination that we're gradually burying



ourselves in of three letters/two numbers and a letter -- and I guess if we keep going for another year we're going to be to the point where it will be three letters/one number and two more letters, which I say 90 out of every 100 people will not be able to remember clearly, and will not give identity, and it's going to cause chaos as far as what the true meaningfulness of a license plate was.

I think that brings you up-to-date. I don't think I've misinformed you of anything the Colonel has said. All of us have read over the weekend what you had delivered to us, and you did a very good job on the presentation. I want to be very complimentary to you.

MR. PAULSEN: Thank you, Senator. I have a brief overview statement of a page and a half that I can share with you in written form. Then we can go right into questions.

SENATOR GRAVES: Go ahead, Director. Have you read Colonel Pagano's statement?

MR. PAULSEN: Yes.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, good. For the record, the Director of Motor Vehicles will now give his presentation.

MR. PAULSEN: Good morning, Senator Graves, Senator Bassano, Senator Rice. I don't think a long statement is essential here. The members of the Committee are well versed on the issue. I can tell you that we have prepared, at your request, an overview of a potential reflectorized plate program, and have given you a fact sheet that contains a back update as completely as we can, with regard to our best estimate of cost for that program. If in fact a determination is made that the reflectorized plates should be implemented and the funding is provided, our program calls for a total issue that would take two and a half years. We would be prepared to commence that program in July of '88, at which point in time our data base should be stabilized through our error correction efforts.

The first six months would be a tool up for the Division of Motor Vehicles, and for the State Use Industries -- who in fact makes the plates. The next full year would be involved with issuing new plates to the 1.2 million or so drivers who obtain new plates each year at agencies, plus handling the 500,000 government plates and special plates that are on the street. The third year we would handle the 5.2 million drivers who would not otherwise be getting new plates, plus the 1.2 million new drivers. The completion date would be December 31, 1990, at which point in time there would be one reflectorized plate on the road.

Our presentation assumes two plates, front and rear, and assumes fully recognized -- for the purpose of cost that is sheeting as opposed to the beading process. The additional cost as best we can estimate -- over and above the present plate program -- would be \$18.7 million for the two and a half years. The additional ongoing cost would be the difference between \$2.25 for a set of reflectorized plates, and the current cost of \$1.16 or \$1.09 for 1.2 million drivers each year; which comes to a total of about 1.3 million each year as the additional ongoing cost, as best we can presently estimate.

So the purpose of our being here is to answer whatever questions the Committee may have with regard to how we could implement the program. There is in fact one area that I would like to amend and change, that was in the documents that were sent to you over the weekend; that is on page two, under implementation, A. Assumptions, number 4. We stated in that document that we would continue the present series of alpha/numerics. Upon further study over the weekend, we find that in fact if there was a totally new plate, it would be fairly easy for us to go back to three and three -- in other words three letters and three numbers, and then reverse that as you suggested just a minute ago in your conversation -- and we would be able to do that. That series should last at least through the year 2000.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, fine. So to amplify, what I think I hear you saying. Number one, you're agreeing with Colonel Pagano that we should have a reflectorized license plate.

MR. PAULSEN: I defer to the Colonel and the Chiefs of Police, and the other people that are here to testify. There certainly is a safety factor involved, and a reflectorized plate program is certainly in the best interest of the law enforcement community and safety. Yes, sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: So therefore, you're supportive that we should have a reflectorized license plate?

MR. PAULSEN: I am, subject to the funding being provided through the appropriations process to cover the 18.7 million.

SENATOR GRAVES: I'm going to make a suggestion on that. First I want to establish a strong foundation that it just isn't Frank Graves saying that, now I've also heard from Senator Rice and Senator Bassano, of their strong feeling. I just want to establish a foundation that all of us agree. The five of us agree, that there should be -- in the best interest for the so many reasons that have been amplified here today -- a reflectorized license plate for the State of New Jersey.

MR. PAULSEN: I don't disagree that from a safety standpoint which we should have it.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay. Number two, we could probably agree that right now there are three types of license plates in the 30-year run that now exists -- I think it's more than a 30-year run -- and that is the buff, the one year reflectorized that New Jersey tried it, and then -- and this isn't meant with any disrespect. I can remember clearly an impression in my mind -- because of my legislation has to do with Law and Public Safety -- that Brendan Byrne issued an order one day, that he had discussed this, and his daughter had chosen this color at the dinner table the night before. It's not meant

disrespectfully whatsoever. You had prevailed upon him not to issue that license plate, but he made his decision, in spite of your input, to do what you said not to do and what his daughter said to do.

COLONEL PAGANO: We'd recommended a given color and, in honesty, we didn't-- Law enforcement -- no voice that I'm aware of -- knew of the new color until we saw it in manufacture.

SENATOR GRAVES: Well my part here is to clarify how we got into this position. It is not disrespectful of Brendan Byrne, because I have respect for him. But, we're trying to bring in how this all happened.

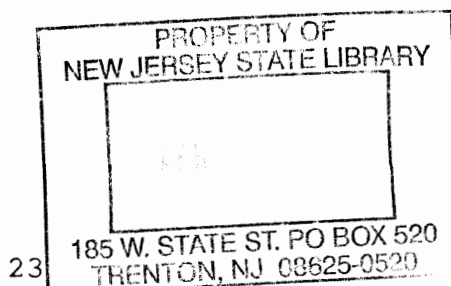
Then we wound up, since about 1980, with millions of this type of license plate. So we really have three types of license plates out there: the buff, the reflectorized, and this one. We're probably the only state in the country that is running and honoring a plate that's 30/35 years old as a valid plate. So what I think both you as the chief law enforcement officer -- other than your boss the Attorney General. I mean as the career person, and the Director of Motor Vehicles, both seem to agree there should be one plate for New Jersey, instead of three plates for New Jersey. So, we have that foundation in that we three agree, and you two in that particular category agree, too.

Then the idea is, too, how much is this going to cost? I think we keep frightening people. I think the opposition keeps building foundations of support by the dramatic figures. It's going to cost 10 million, 20 million, 18, 30 million. I'm suggesting that what it's probably going to cost -- and we should do it as a one shot deal -- that when it comes your turn during this two and a half year period of time, that on your renewal, one time and one time only, you will pay that additional cost for the plate -- that it's \$2 or \$1.50, whatever it is. It wouldn't be a reoccurring item in



the budget, and when you renew it the following year, it wouldn't be at that particular price. One shot. Practically you'll only have two plates in your entire lifetime in the State of New Jersey. In other words, they seem to last thirty years or better, and probably a group of legislators will be sitting here 30 years from today, with your counterparts and our counterparts -- probably the only one in the room is Pat Gilbert who will be young enough to be still sitting here. The rest of us will have retired or gone to funny farms, wherever it might be -- and they'll be making decisions then. But we want to talk about our generation's decision. And our generation's decision is that during that thirty months when your renewal comes up, where you will be compelled to get one distinct license plate that we feel is for your safety, and for many other reasons that we can prevail upon in a note that your Division will send out, that your renewal that year instead of being \$47 will be \$49.50. The following year when you renew your license plate through the mail, it will go back to the other price.

So we don't have to put into the budget any more money. The statute could be that it would be reflected on that one shot deal. I think that could legally be worked out. I'm not going to try to be a constitutional lawyer, because I'm neither constitutional studied nor a lawyer, but I think we could work it out so that we can stop frightening the budget process, and giving Villane and Weiss major coronary effects of, "You're trying to put \$18 million--" No, we won't put anything in the budget. It will be self-contained, self-destroyed, for your best interests. What we have to do is convince the public that \$2 we want from them once -- probably in their lifetime -- is not going to be reoccurring, and the reasons why it should be done. Do you have any objections to that approach?



MR. PAULSEN: Well I think you're leaving out a couple of issues, Senator.

SENATOR GRAVES: Go ahead.

MR. PAULSEN: First, as you say, the cost of the plate. The program costs a little bit more than the plate. The plate costs in this program are about \$15.4 million, the program is 18.7 and change. So that there are some additional costs clearly of administration and mailing.

SENATOR GRAVES: Well, let's bear in on it. Let's find out what it would cost.

MR. PAULSEN: All right, we'll say 18.7 million including the cost, then you make the determination--

SENATOR GRAVES: But you also say -- if memory serves me right -- that you issue brand new 1,200,000 license plates a year.

MR. PAULSEN: Correct.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay. Plus you renew 5,330,000 a year.

MR. PAULSEN: Thereabouts. Yes, sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay. So, now if you're talking about over a two and a half year period of time, you're talking about not only the 5 million, but you're talking about almost 4 million new license plates that you would automatically give for the first time. Initial purchases.

MR. PAULSEN: That's correct. Which would each cost \$1.09 more per se than the present program, just for the plates. To answer your question specifically, I think the determination as to how the cost should be borne for the program, and whether it should be done, is a decision to be made by the policy makers -- by the Legislature in conjunction with the Governor's office. We're the plumbers, and we'll be happy to do our best to make the program a success once those determinations are made; but I applaud the Senator for taking that issue by the horns, so to speak, and being willing to take

a stand as to who should bear the cost. I think that's appropriate.

SENATOR GRAVES: I'm saying that the user should have the one shot use of it. There are 2 or 3 million other people in the State who will never drive a car, and may not even ever own one, or not even be in one so to speak. They use public transportation. We shouldn't burden them with the one shot deal, that it should be just that one person.

MR. PAULSEN: Please do bear in mind, sir, that as the program continues for the 1.2 million per year, that additional cost will be present of about \$1.3 million per year.

SENATOR GRAVES: All right. Senator Bubba is now joining us. I'm just going to give him a one minute brief update. Okay? (Senator Graves confers with Senator Bubba) In fairness, I wanted to bring the Senator up-to-date.

SENATOR BUBBA: You didn't realize that an hour's worth of testimony he just related to me in a minute.

COLONEL PAGANO: Shows the value of what we've said.

SENATOR GRAVES: Imagine we get along? Oh, we do for the campaign. That's right, we're getting along fine. So the two Senators from Passaic County agree. So now we're onto that position.

The Colonel also spoke about photo drivers' licenses. Mr. Director, we figured we would take advantage, while he's at the microphone, to talk about both subjects. Photo drivers' licenses is -- I guess you know that -- that was my legislation a number of years ago. Brendan Byrne reluctantly signed it on the last day he left office. There was a target time it was to be implemented, but it fell flat on its face, and computerization was offered as an excuse. Then I think the State -- this is the Chairman's reflection -- I think the State rightfully went to the private world to offer its constituency the photo drivers' licenses, but that got caught in a political mishmash. It's unfortunate because I think the Sears Roebuck

venture would have been a good one. I think we would have enjoyed it, and I think that would have been very convenient. I don't care whether its Stern's, Macy's, or whoever it was. The idea was good in my estimation. I'm not speaking for the Committee on that one.

I then introduced legislation to stop what we were giving -- a disservice to our constituency -- and we changed the law -- which originally was my law -- that you would just do it on your initial driver's license. No matter what your age was, your first one had to be a four-year-- Then you could do it if you wanted to. How many of them still do it? In other words, how many of our constituency, when their four-year valid photo driver's license-- How many of them go back and keep the photo driver's license, or because of the inconvenience of it, go back to the old type of driver's license? What's your percentage?

MR. PAULSEN: I don't have that statistic handy. I can tell you that over 30% of the licenses issued are photo licenses. I'll try to get that statistic for you if you want it, sir. I don't have it available today.

SENATOR GRAVES: Well that's not too bad in my estimation, because of the disservice-- It's not too easy to get a photo driver's license in the State of New Jersey. How many places do you have today that are State run or vendor operated by the State, that offer you a photo driver's license?

MR. PAULSEN: Fifty-five.

SENATOR GRAVES: Fifty-five. And they all--

MR. PAULSEN: I've got to back out the dealer only agencies. We have four dealer only agencies, fifty-one Senator.

SENATOR GRAVES: Fifty-one, okay you were close enough. How many of our constituency use that for renewing their driver's license, as compared to where the State mails it out and you can conveniently -- instead of getting your photo driver's license -- mail in your check for your two year driver's license from the State?

MR. PAULSEN: I don't have that statistic handy, sir. I'll try to get it for you.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay. I think we should build into it, because I think once we've established that we want a new license plate -- as Colonel Pagano has dramatically pointed out here today, and as Senators Rice and Bassano have agreed, and certainly Senator Graves up to this point -- and you're helping with the foundation, that you have approval for the review-- You know the reasons why to have a reflectorized license plate. But your concern is also, how much is it going to cost, and how would it be paid for?

MR. PAULSEN: Yes. Let me just add a sentence or two. Again, we are prepared to do the program, and we're prepared to do it as outlined within the costs set forth. You understand the tremendous effort that we're undergoing at the Division of Motor Vehicles. We have a lot of things on the plate, and there is a question of priority setting; but I'm telling you that as of July 1, 1988, with the funding and the decision made by the policy makers, we'll do it.

SENATOR GRAVES: You'll be ready?

MR. PAULSEN: We'll do it.

SENATOR GRAVES: Good. I can understand the Attorney General's-- It was low priority with all the problems that you had. So, I can understand that. I think if I was in the same position I would have said the same thing. But as you said, about 80% of your problems are straightened out, through your direction, through your management.

MR. PAULSEN: Did I say that? Eighty percent of the problems are straightened out? It doesn't feel like it everyday, Senator, but okay.

SENATOR GRAVES: You're not close to that yet? Your over the halfway mark aren't you?

MR. PAULSEN: I hope so.



SENATOR GRAVES: Well, I'm saying -- you say by July 1, 1988 you'll be ready -- if we say to do it, and the Governor approves it -- you'll be ready to implement our new license plate?

MR. PAULSEN: Yes sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: So, then that means you'll have 80% of your problems behind you. Go ahead, Senator.

SENATOR BUBBA: With respect to the license plate. Senator Graves, is the figure that I heard as I was coming in of \$1.50, was that a ball park figure or was that an accurate figure? A dollar fifty per plate, or two dollars per plate to--

MR. PAULSEN: Two dollars and twenty five cents for a set of reflectorized plates, as opposed to a present cost of \$1.16.

SENATOR GRAVES: One shot deal.

SENATOR BUBBA: All right. So, it will cost for all renewals an additional \$2.25--

MR. PAULSEN: Right.

SENATOR BUBBA: --for new plates being issued only--

MR. PAULSEN: It's \$1.09.

SENATOR BUBBA: --about 1.09, okay. I think it's creative thinking on the part of Senator Graves with respect to making it a one time charge. This way we don't get used to collecting the money every year. I know I'm not baseless-- then what we're saying that the cost to the Division would be minimal. You'd have to process paper--

MR. PAULSEN: Well it depends whether you include the administrative cost, and what you're going to pass on. That's a decision to be made by you.

SENATOR BASSANO: Well, if they have to renew their plates anyway-- I imagine we're going to do this at renewal times?

MR. PAULSEN: As opposed to initials or special plates, yes.

SENATOR BUBBA: Yes. So, on that basis, there wouldn't be any additional administrative costs. The only additional cost would be the cost for the plate.

MR. PAULSEN: If we do 5.2 million in one year with plates, that's a tremendous labor intensive effort.

SENATOR BUBBA: But you have to renew every year.

MR. PAULSEN: Registrations, but not issue plates. We would have to marry the registration document to the series of plates, plus produce the plates.

SENATOR GRAVES: But Director, you outlined we'd do it over 30 months, not one year.

MR. PAULSEN: Yes, sir. Well the 5.2 million renewals would all be in that third year, Senator, as outlined in the program.

SENATOR BUBBA: All right, so \$2.25 is the cost of the new plate?

MR. PAULSEN: Correct.

SENATOR BUBBA: What I think you ought to establish is, if it costs another 10¢ to process the paper, I'm willing to support \$2.35. Just don't try to put in the increases for the next 20 years in this one piece of legislation.

MR. PAULSEN: Senator, the document that we prepared for you -- and had, I think, delivered over the weekend -- is additional cost for implementation of the program analyzed just the way that you are articulating it. The additional costs are 18.7 million during that two and a half year period, 15.4 of which are for plates, the balance for administration and mailing, etc.

SENATOR BUBBA: All right, so it's a reasonable figure. Since I have the Director before me, with the permission of the Chair, I'd like to address another problem with respect to the photo driver's license.

SENATOR GRAVES: That's going to be the second part of his testimony. That's what we did with the Colonel too. The

Colonel first went through license plates, then we did photo drivers' licenses.

COLONEL PAGANO: Senator, may I just make one or two points with reference to cost--

SENATOR GRAVES: Sure.

COLONEL PAGANO: --and remind you that the original bill did provide that the cost be passed through to the motorists, with no more than 5¢ difference. Secondly, in the material I've given you today, the United States Department of Transportation did conduct a study which indicated that the majority of all motorists would pay up to \$100 for any safety device that they felt would truthfully protect them on the highway. So there is quite a difference here. The general attitude is that he will pay for air bags and things like that, if it can be shown that it will help his safety.

Beyond that, Senator, I don't know how much more you want to go into with me. I have a group waiting in Sea Girt, that I'd like to go down and pay attention to.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, unless one of the Senators has something in particular, we'll go with the Director.

SENATOR BUBBA: All right, let me just say my piece on this photo driver's license, because I think you're involved in it. It appears that when a person goes in to get a duplicate license, that what they must produce-- I lost my license. What must I produce? I must produce my birth certificate, some sort of identification, that identifies me, certainly not a picture of-- Well, you can bring a picture down there to show who this person is that's on this birth certificate. But what's happening is that underage people are changing their birth certificates, or using -- I think what they're doing is using somebody else's birth certificate that is of age.

COLONEL PAGANO: You are correct. In prior testimony, what I said Senator, is that we're working through the rebuilding group -- for want of a better term -- to try and

correct some of the problems. We in law enforcement are putting these issues out to the Director and to the Attorney General, so that we can-- Because what you're saying -- and maybe to simplify it even further -- when these people go to the agencies and request a duplicate license, they're standing next to the camera having their picture taken on their brother's or cousin's, or someone else's data, and it is problematic. It is not as difficult as you have portrayed to get that done. We're not requiring all the identification that would be desirable for that matter. We have other ways that we are discussing of precluding that kind of activity.

SENATOR BUBBA: The thing though that bothers me deeply about this is that, when this driver's license is presented to a tavern owner, the word "dup" is so small and difficult to locate, that if someone serves an underage driver -- or an underage drinker -- that they've got serious problems.

COLONEL PAGANO: It leaves that tavern owner indefensible.

SENATOR BUBBA: Excuse me?

COLONEL PAGANO: It creates a tremendous problem for that tavern owner.

SENATOR BUBBA: Yes. So, if we were to take that word "dup" and make that larger, then if the tavern owner wanted to-- Whenever he sees a "dup" license, he's taking his own risks. If he could identify that as being a duplicate license, then he could make a judgment whether he really wants to serve that guy; or he says "Wait a minute. I don't want to take the chance. It's a dup license. It might be one of those deals where the kid took somebody else's identification," and be done with it. I think that's the least that we could do. Thank you.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay. Colonel, is any of your staff remaining with us with some of the license plates?

COLONEL PAGANO: Yes. We have the people that Miss Szilagyi called upon yesterday here, and I'll leave them-- Not

that I'll leave them behind. They'll remain with the material, all of which I think the Director has seen to this point.

SENATOR GRAVES: Colonel, I hope that this is the last time you have to go through this.

COLONEL PAGANO: Well I hope I see you again someday, Senator, but not on these damn reflectorized plates.

SENATOR GRAVES: Yes. I think maybe we can wrap it up once and for all.

COLONEL PAGANO: We've got Chief Parenti and Lieutenant Dileo here also that can add, if there's anything to be added.

SENATOR GRAVES: That will be great. I think we're going to finish with the photo drivers' licenses with the Director of Motor Vehicles now too.

SENATOR BASSANO: Can I ask one question?

SENATOR GRAVES: Go ahead. Senator Bassano-- Who, the Colonel?

SENATOR BASSANO: No, Mr. Paulsen.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, the Director.

SENATOR BASSANO: Assuming we issue new license plates, as you're probably aware the specialized plates now cost \$50. In addition the courtesy plates that the Senators issue -- or give permission to be issued -- are I think \$15 a set. Would we again charge people with new plates that have specialized plates, and have courtesy plates? Or do they now pay that fee again because new plates are being issues?

MR. PAULSEN: Again I think -- I applaud Senator Graves for saying it -- that that's a decision that should be made by the policy makers, by the Legislature in conjunction with the Governor's office. If the cost is going to be passed on to the consumer with regard to the regular plates, it would seem logical to follow that it would be passed on for the special plates as well.

SENATOR BASSANO: So therefore, if a person had a plate issued three years ago at \$50 with a special logo on it -- or saying whatever they want on it - they would have to have that issued again, and pay another \$50 to receive that?

MR. PAULSEN: Not necessarily. We'd figure out the cost of the plate and the issuance. I can tell you though, that the phase II of the program in which we propose to handle the government plates and the special issue plates -- is an area that causes us significant concern in terms of administrative costs, because as opposed to just reissuing you another license plate along with your registration renewal, we've got to verify exactly what you had, that you still want it, and so forth. That's going to be a much more labor intensive process handling those 500,000 special plates. So there may be some more administrative costs that would be better allocated to that process than other processes.

SENATOR BASSANO: Would you suggest that possible given consideration to going back to base 0, if you will? That is, anyone who wanted a courtesy plate or wanted a specialized plate, would have to pay that additional cost over again, because the new plates are being issued?

MR. PAULSEN: I think I can't go any further than say that, if the decision of the policy makers is that the cost should be passed on, then the appropriate portion of the cost for the issuance of the plate to those who hold specialty plates should be passed on. The amount of that I can't tell.

SENATOR BASSANO: Just the cost, not the full amount though?

MR. PAULSEN: We would only be concerned with the charge actually incurred for the plate and the processing. That would be our only concern.

SENATOR BASSANO: The question also that I want to ask you, if a license plate was given out, special license plate in 1961 -- with the county designation and with the number on it



-- is that license plate in effect issued for life? Or do you issue that plate over again? Or is that something that you're again going to leave up to us?

MR. PAULSEN: I'm not sure of the specific situation that you're referring to. I can tell you that the handling of the whole special plate program presents a number of problems for the Division of Motor Vehicles. But, special plates are here to stay, we'll clean up the problems as best we can, and administer a clean program to the best of our ability.

SENATOR BASSANO: Okay, thank you.

MR. PAULSEN: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, I think we've established ourselves very well on the need of new license plates. Let's talk a little about the photo drivers' licenses. It's something that you inherited the tail end of, that you really had no part in playing what went wrong. If 48 states can give somewhere in the neighborhood of 100 million photo drivers' licenses, without any discomfort to its constituency, I've got to believe that New Jersey can do the same thing. I still believe that, yes there will always be someone who will not want a photo driver's license for reasons that they can best put together. But 100 million people do have photo drivers' licenses, they have to have photo drivers' licenses, and they clearly indicate in today's world that you have some remarkable identification with you, because you don't want to carry money any more. You're afraid to carry \$25 or \$50 because of what the consequences might be in shopping center or what have you. I'm not going to try to put you on the spot.

MR. PAULSEN: No, that's all right.

SENATOR GRAVES: Do you have -- an off the cuff expression-- Do you favor the photo drivers' licenses or are you against them?

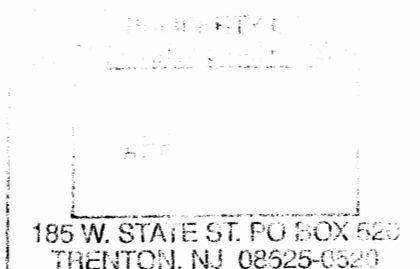
MR. PAULSEN: I favor an option. I favor the present system, that is, first time drivers -- new drivers, kids--

SENATOR GRAVES: Regardless of age?

MR. PAULSEN: Regardless of age, photo license, four years. I think that after that you should have the option to choose. I'm fully aware of the problems that occur. I have a paper license, and if I happen to drive in some other state and they think New Jersey is a photo license state, I may be detained for a longer period of time while they check and see that my license is in fact accurate. I know that I then have deficiencies in terms of identification. I choose to have the paper license as an adult because I don't find that I have need for that identification, and I like to deal with DMV through the mail. I get my renewal application, I send my money in, and I get my paper license back. That's not to say, Senator, that we do not think that the paper license should be improved. The present form is no good. We are working in the reform process on coming up with an alternative to that. Our proposal is not fully matured yet, but we're looking at ways to produce a card that would look not unlike a credit card. Then it would have greater strength, both for what we're going to call paper licenses -- in a generic sense -- and for registrations on vehicles. But I think that I as an adult should have that option.

I'm terribly concerned with a compulsory photo license program that would require our senior citizens throughout the State to have to come to some location -- whether it's one of our 51 locations, or whether we can disperse it more through a plan not unlike what was talked about before -- they would still have to go to a location to get that license, primarily for a convenience for them as a primary identifier.

SENATOR GRAVES: But, Mr. Director, I think the present law did exclude anyone over 60. I think that photo driver's license statute did exclude-- Anyone over 60, would not have to participate. We took that into consideration.



MR. PAULSEN: I can tell you that the present position of the Division of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Law and Public Safety is--

SENATOR GRAVES: I'm not debating you. I just pointing out that.

MR. PAULSEN: --is that we agree with mandatory photo licenses for first time drivers. We also agree that we need to address some of the questions raised by Senator Bubba, and we are working on developing a more tamper proof photo license, and giving consideration to whether or not -- in the case of minors perhaps -- there should be a stamp across the photo that indicates "minor," whether or not the picture should be taken in profile, in addition a means by which we can make tamper proof the laminate or the card itself. Our contract will be up in I believe January, so we'll be working on a new RFP, which will include those factors in it, so that we will have a more secure, more tamper proof photo license. But, our position is that first time drivers, mandatory; after that, optional. We would like to give people after that first time around, an option of two or four years. One of the things that we see a lot is concern in that regard, and we would like to be able to factor that in as well.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay. I realize that I'm an enthusiastic supporter of the photo drivers' licenses, because it was my legislation that brought it about. And I still am. But I believe that I know that the worst thing that I could do is try to thrust that on the public today. Why? Because you're not ready for it. To force our constituency into a photo driver's license in New Jersey today, would be a tragedy. But I do believe that maybe a year from today, if we're all willing to be here and sit down and discuss it, that at that time we could develop that further. I think, in fairness, I better put the photo driver's license bill of mine, on the back burner because, number one, the State of New Jersey

isn't ready to present to its constituency a convenience for something that it's telling them it must do.

MR. PAULSEN: Au contraire. I mean, our position is that it's a convenience for the public to have the option of choosing whether or not they want to have a photo license, or whether or not they want to renew through the mail for a paper license.

SENATOR GRAVES: I'm not going to debate you on that. That's your feeling, and my feeling is just the opposite. But my feeling is prevailed upon, that if I were to write a law, and was to get the legislators to pass it again, and the Governor to sign it, then I know that I would be in disservice to the constituency because you're not ready to do it.

MR. PAULSEN: If we had sufficient lead time we could implement.

SENATOR GRAVES: Sure, and I don't think we'll ever be able to conveniently do it with only 51 places to do it in this State. That would be a total disservice -- somebody taking the day off to go get their picture taken, to get on a photo driver's license.

MR. PAULSEN: There is a problem with peaks and valleys for the renewals of driver's licenses. I don't have that data before me, but I think we just came off a very big year in terms of renewal driver's licenses, and then it drops off. There are reasons for it that I can't articulate right now, but that level workload--

SENATOR GRAVES: But about 30% of the people in the State of New Jersey have a photo driver's license, and half of them are doing it because they want to?

MR. PAULSEN: Yes sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, that's about what the sum total is. Just one more thing, and then I'm going to turn it over to Senator Bubba for a couple of questions -- Senator Rice and Senator Bassano. Are you presently entertaining any store

outlets -- as was done a number of years ago -- to help offset and provide more convenience for the public? Is your Division giving any thought to that? Or is that on a back burner too?

MR. PAULSEN: Yes, we're giving very intensive thought to how we deliver our services in the field to the motorists of this State. The whole issue of State run agencies versus the private sector, you're very well aware of the debate on that issue. You're aware of the fact that on the Assembly side there is a committee -- meeting in fact tomorrow -- headed by Assemblyman Singer, on the issue of privatization. What we have done through the planning process that we've gone through the last half year, is to develop a model agency in terms of what services should be provided, what the facilities should look like, where they should be located, how many we need, and what types of people we need to properly do them. We are amenable, if somebody can tell us how to draft an RFP for it to go out to private bids, and consider that. Likewise, by virtue of an executive order of the Governor, we have a private sector advisory panel consisting of high level executives from a number of primarily retail operations, with whom we are sharing that data, and asking for their input as to how best we can proceed, and whether or not the private sector would have any interest in a portion of that operation or all of it. We are actively working on that, sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, but you are pursuing it? Because I for one have been studying this too for five years, and I don't think we should let the private sector do it unless we have a chain of stores that were doing it. To give it out, you in Ocean County you can do it, you in Passaic County-- We're going to have the State-- I think this is one area of government that the State can better run than these individual retail stores so to speak, unless we had a whole group of a chain store -- whether it be Pep Boys, or Sears and Roebuck, or Macy's, Stern's, or whoever it is -- and I hope I don't offend

anybody by leaving their trade name out, but I think you generally get what I'm driving at. Senator Bubba?

MR. PAULSEN: Yes sir.

SENATOR BUBBA: In the case of both the driver's license and the license plate-- You know I have a great respect for the business industry in the State of New Jersey, and if we got a little bit creative with them and asked them how would it be profitable for them to develop a plan for picture taking, then I'm sure that they're going to come up with one. Insofar as how to set up an RFP, I mean it would have to be done on the basis of how much money they require from the State per picture, as an example; or how much money they required from the State for license plates. Let me give you an example. There's a network of car dealers in the State of New Jersey that would be more than pleased to be able to hand out license plates, and collect a fee, and pass the fee on to the State, and do whatever they have to do, as a service to the people that are buying the automobiles there, so the people don't have to go and stand in line at Motor Vehicle. They do it now with temporary plates.

MR. PAULSEN: They'll handle the whole transaction for you, for a fee.

SENATOR BUBBA: Yes, and I don't know that somebody said to me, "I'll get your plates for you. Give me five bucks." Rather than stand in line, I just may want to do that. Or if someone said to me, "You know, I can save you an awful lot of aggravation. I'll come down to the senior citizen housing development or the New Jersey Institute of Technology and I'll bring this camera down, and I'll take pictures of the whole student body for a buck a picture, two bucks a picture, whatever." I think the general public likes to pay for convenience. If we get a little bit creative on how we run the Department and open the doors a little bit-- Now we need to maintain security, there's no questions about that, and I think



we do an effective job at that. We can do a better job, but it's as effective as it can be right now.

MR. PAULSEN: The whole issue that you're raising -- one of multiple providers -- is one that's been looked at. I can tell you that particularly in regard to services for the handicapped -- in terms of handicapped placards and IDs -- we're looking at a method of distribution through places that would be convenient to them right now. I reviewed briefly a proposal on that in the last two days, and we're hopeful of being able to make those services available at a number of locations where they would regularly visit, as opposed to a motor vehicle agency. We have some concerns about security and the handling and the charges were we to in effect make the auto dealers additional providers of basic core services, although I can tell you that we are still discussing that issue.

SENATOR BUBBA: You know, you just bring to mind that if most of us go to a Pathmark, they have a camera there to take pictures for the checks that are being cashed. I mean, that operation could be expanded a little bit. I'm not saying that Pathmark should be the choice. All I'm saying is that there has to be a way to creatively handle a problem that we all think ought to be handled. How many drivers' licenses do we have per year, about?

MR. PAULSEN: As I said, there are huge peaks and valleys in that. May I introduce Christine Cox, Deputy Director of the Division. If she has an answer she can say, "yes." If "no," she can just leave me out here to hang.

C H R I S T I N E R. C O X: Well, there's a total of just over 5 million drivers. What the Director mentioned a minute ago is that workload isn't evenly one quarter each year. We have four years renewals for licenses now. If that were evenly distributed, it would be approximately a quarter of that each year.

SENATOR GRAVES: Even the paper licenses is four years, like a photo license?

MS. COX: Yes it is.

SENATOR BUBBA: Well, why not undertake a program to make it equally distributed over four years? In other words, on a selection process basis, make licenses available so that you can get rid of them--

SENATOR GRAVES: After elections, Joe.

SENATOR BUBBA: After elections?

SENATOR GRAVES: Don't let them get a two year license. (laughter)

SENATOR BUBBA: After elections, you're right. But that can be worked into the scheme of things.

MR. PAULSEN: It could be done.

SENATOR BUBBA: But if we're dealing with 5 million, then we're dealing with, what, about 100,000 per 50 locations? Is that what we're talking about? That gets to be a little bit heavy. So, on that basis, you'd need to have maybe 500 locations, or 5000.

MR. PAULSEN: I don't disagree with the Senator when he says if the program would be mandatory for everyone, we would need additional places to provide service that would be convenient. I don't disagree for a minute. I disagree with the position, from our standpoint.

SENATOR GRAVES: No problems. I disagree with even implementing it, unless we were ready to do it. If New Jersey didn't learn three years ago -- even though it had three years to gear up to do it, that it did it without being ready then. We've lost a lot of friends in New Jersey because of their memories of trying to get a photo drivers' license, when we weren't prepared to give them a photo driver's license.

MR. PAULSEN: If I may, just apropos to that point on the question about providing services and drafting RFP to go out for bid to the private sector the photo license. The issue

points out the difficulties in terms of doing an RFP. In fact, what we went through was an RFP -- what the Division went through, I wasn't there -- was an RFP, predicated on certain volumes based on everybody having to do it. The company then responds to the bid and gears up to it on that volume basis. And in fact, legislation changed and the program gets dramatically changed, and the number gets dramatically reduced. As a result, we wind up in negotiations with the vendor as to what's the next draw, and what is under the contract and what isn't. So in a fluid environment -- and you have a fluid environment anytime you have policy makers making decisions on new programs to be done -- it becomes very difficult to craft an RFP that has any viability for any period of time. That's the point that I was trying to make, Senator.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, Senators, I think that for 10 years now, certain people in this audience have been working on presentation of a license plate. I would hope the Director and his assistant would stay there. Would you come up with some of those license plates and show the-- Who has them? Are the State troopers still here? Do they have any of the plates with them? (confers with aide) Okay.

C H I E F A N T H O N Y P A R E N T I: What I have is what the committee submitted.

SENATOR GRAVES: Would you introduce yourself? Start at the microphone and introduce yourself for the record.

CHIEF PARENTI: I am Chief Anthony Parenti of the Fanwood Police Department, I am here today representing the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police. I was chairman of the selection committee for the license plate, to comply with SCR, I believe it was 131. What I have here is a sample of the plate that the committee picked and submitted as a result of the work that they did, which I'll--

SENATOR GRAVES: Good, share it here. Hold it up and share it, and tell us what it is. Is it a reflectorized plate, and what the color scheme is?

CHIEF PARENTI: (Shows samples to the Committee) The first choice was a reflectorized plate, that had New Jersey at the top, with two red lines, and three letter/number/letter combinations, and Garden State at the bottom. That was the first choice.

SENATOR GRAVES: Has New York beat us to that plate now?

CHIEF PARENTI: New York I think kind of copied New Jersey's plate. That's what it looks like.

SENATOR GRAVES: That's a reflectorized plate, too. Is that right Chief?

MR. PAULSEN: This is a reflectorized plate, and it's fully reflectorized. That means, the background is reflectorized, and the letters and numbers are reflectorized. The second choice--

SENATOR GRAVES: Wait a minute. Mr. Director, you have a New York--

MR. PAULSEN: New York?

SENATOR GRAVES: Yes. I guess that's why--  
(inaudible)

CHIEF PARENTI: As you'll see, New York and New Jersey ended up pretty much the same.

SENATOR GRAVES: Yes, it looks like New York beat us to our own game.

CHIEF PARENTI: They beat us to the punch on color, but again, when I get into my testimony a little later, I would like to--

SENATOR GRAVES: We're going to share that testimony with you now. We like to kill two birds with one stone.

CHIEF PARENTI: You want to do it right now?

SENATOR GRAVES: Sure, but also will you show us the second choice plates, since the first choice is now dead and buried.

CHIEF PARENTI: The second choice was a simpler plate. They eliminated the red, and again with the three letters and the three numbers, just taking off the red.

Then there was a third choice which went back to the first choice, and that was to put a silhouette of the State of New Jersey between letters and numbers. That was the third choice.

SENATOR GRAVES: That sort of flew in the face of Colonel Pagano, who said we should just concentrate on what a plate is made for, identification.

CHIEF PARENTI: That's correct sir. What we did when the committee was doing this work, we looked at all types of plates from the various states. We looked at what New Jersey had in the past. We went back as far as we could go, I think back to the '20s. This is what we came up with, because New Jersey was looking for a change. Now if I may just for one moment get my notes.

SENATOR GRAVES: Please do it.

CHIEF PARENTI: We spent a lot of time looking at plates, and letter and number combinations. And as I said, we studied the license plates of other states. It's interesting when you study the plates at quick glance you can see most of them are white background. And I think what's paramount here is, you need a light background. I'm not going to go into what you covered before, because I would just be repeating -- as far as the safety, and what have you, of the plate.

There is one point that I would like to bring out, and that is, under the current combination -- and even in the buff and black -- one problem that we really did encounter and still do in law enforcement, is where someone tries to alter a plate; that is if it's the buff and black they take a piece of black tape and they make a "3" a "B" or they can make a "3" an "8" and so on. They can alter a plate, and that throws us off. In our experimentation, when we dealt with reflectorized plates,

we couldn't do that. We couldn't take a piece of tape -- even it were reflectorized tape -- and change the identification or the number of the plate, because you're still going to end up with two different substances and the reflectorization will be different, and it'll show right up, even in daytime or nighttime. So that told us that we needed a reflectorized plate. The background had to be reflectorized, and the numbers and letters had to be reflectorized as well.

What we are suggesting now-- I'll even save you more time. I'll wear my second hat and speak for the New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association at the same time as New Jersey Association of Chiefs of Police. When we discussed this, we decided that in view of what's happened we missed our chance. There's no question about it, New Jersey missed their chance. When we didn't go into reflectorized plates when we could have, or should have, New York beat us to the punch. But maybe it was a blessing in disguise, because we went back to the straw and black plate. We liked that plate, and in all of this experimentation it showed up just as well as the oyster and blue, or oyster and red, or oyster and black, plate.

One thing again in looking at all the plates -- and I'll bring this up and show it to you a little closer -- is that if we go back to straw and black, now we are going to be uniquely different then the rest of the country, because even in this one here -- which is Wisconsin, the straw and black -- they got away from it. They went to the oyster background plate, and so did Pennsylvania. They don't have it any more either. So if you look at all the plates that are issued in the country, we go to straw and black we are going to be uniquely different.

SENATOR BASSANO: I have to ask you a question. You're saying that most of the states have gone to the white background with the dark letters. I'm sitting up here, and



you're showing me that sample, and I find it easier to read the light letters with the dark background, from where I'm sitting here.

CHIEF PARENTI: The oyster and--

SENATOR BASSANO: No, no. Any plate that you have there, any sample that has a dark background with the light letters seems easier to read than the opposite, with the light background and dark letters.

CHIEF PARENTI: If I may, it's probably because when they photographed it, they are reflectorized and they are going to show up better in print.

SENATOR BASSANO: In the white background, the letter and number designations seem to get lost in that white background, where it's the opposite--

CHIEF PARENTI: Oh, I see what you're saying. Okay.

SENATOR BASSANO: Yes, the darker background and the white letters seem to be easier to read.

MR. PAULSEN: Can you see New Jersey's old plate, the black and-- Right up here?

SENATOR BASSANO: Yes, I can see that.

CHIEF PARENTI: How does that look to you as compared to the rest, from where you sit?

SENATOR BASSANO: It looks a little easier to read than the pure white backgrounds, but still the darker background plates -- the dark green, the purple colors -- they seem to be easier to read with the light letters. Maybe it's just where I'm sitting, I don't know.

CHIEF PARENTI: Again, you're looking at them in daylight conditions too. What we have to consider is nighttime conditions when the plates want to reflect. We found that the lighter the background at nighttime, the better reflectorization we got, when we did our experimentation. As a matter of fact, we even took one of the old plates -- it was very old -- and put it through the car wash several times -- a thousand times I guess -- and that showed up pretty good too.

The other thing that we did in committee, in looking at some of the older plates we found that the paint, after a period of time, would wear off the plate. Whereas with the reflectorized plate, that didn't happen. I believe we went a couple of years with the buff and black plate, that didn't happen.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, I am drawing something, than you're the third person that testifies that you strongly, absolutely, totally, recommend a reflectorized plate?

CHIEF PARENTI: Without any questions. Without any doubt.

SENATOR GRAVES: And a different color scheme, then what New Jersey is now presenting?

CHIEF PARENTI: Yes. The buff and blue plate is totally unacceptable.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, so it's totally unacceptable, as the Colonel said, you're saying? The Director of Motor Vehicles didn't say that, but you're both saying that?

CHIEF PARENTI: We're saying, from a law enforcement standpoint, it's unsafe.

SENATOR GRAVES: So, all three of you agree on a reflectorized plate. Two of you completely agree that New Jersey's present color is the least presentable for the things that it should be doing for identifying the vehicle, is that correct?

CHIEF PARENTI: Yes sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, and now the color scheme that you adopted in 1979 has now been taken by New York, so that one is out. You're talking to us about possible recommending to the Director of Motor Vehicles that we go back to the straw and black. Is there some way that your prisoners could run off about a 100 plates reflectorized on the old straw and black--

MR. PAULSEN: Senator, my employees have been called a lot of things, but not prisoners. (laughter)

SENATOR GRAVES: No, but they are-- Aren't all our plates produced in prison?

MR. PAULSEN: They're State Use Industries, yes sir. They're produced in a prison.

SENATOR GRAVES: Right.

MR. PAULSEN: We contract with them to produce the plates, that's correct. The question is, whether or not we could go back to the straw and black. Is that the question?

SENATOR GRAVES: Could you run off, is there some die cast that's left there or something, to run off about 100 of those plates, modernized, completely reflectorized, with the straw and black -- that both Colonel Pagano and the Chief have outlined to this Committee? Only one plate, not two so that it could fall into somebody's hands and be used as a device to present itself as a legitimate attachment, when that isn't so. Is that possible?

MR. PAULSEN: I'm told that the answer to that is no, because they don't have any of that available presently. Mr. Black, from State Use Industries is here, but that's the information; that it's not possible.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay.

CHIEF PARENTI: Senator, if I may.

SENATOR GRAVES: Go ahead.

CHIEF PARENTI: I'm sure you can impose upon the same people that made these up for us.

SENATOR GRAVES: Who made them up for you?

CHIEF PARENTI: 3M.

SENATOR GRAVES: 3M?

CHIEF PARENTI: Yes sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: Senator Rice?

SENATOR RICE: Yes, I have some concerns. Everything that was basically said by law enforcement here today, this Committee agrees with. But I have to say that I have life experiences that other people don't have, and I've traveled a

lot. I would support dollars, and I think there are ways to work out the cost itself, as it relates to where we have to go. But I have a real concern about the plates: Number one, I'm concerned about white plates all over the country, because working in that field -- and I'm out every day, just as Senator Graves is as Mayor and police director -- and there's too much confusion. I would like to see, without prolonging anything, statistics done-- You see, in other words, if it's going to be an orange and black plate, I would like to know that up and down the east coast the probability of another state -- being here substantially in numbers -- some visitor or what have you with orange and black is small. That's what we have to look at. We have to look geographically at where those plates are coming from, in terms of the suitability of these colors. Because all up and down this east coast, you can go all the way up to Boston and all the way down, everybody has white and something. It's difficult extracting information -- whether it's a high speed chase, whether you're just trying to move through a crowd, etc.

We've encouraged citizens to get involved as crime watchers and to be more productive, and more allegiance to us in terms of identifying the criminal element. We talk about the cost. You know, we ought to talk about what the citizen can do to help us reduce the cost of crime, which helps us reduce the cost of something else, etc., which means those plates become fruitless if we're talking safety and crime. Is safety nothing -- if we get the digits off but don't identify the state? Because you know yourself from being in law enforcement, if you do a computer hit it's not going to kick back unless you have some additional information, or at least the state it's registered. Then once again, I say you may very well get a hit from a state that's not New Jersey, it does appear to be a New Jersey plate, and we could very well make unlawful arrests. Make unlawful arrests for probable cause,

but at the same time inconvenience some people, do harm to people's reputations, injury to a person's business -- depending on what kind of confrontation you have -- or even injury to the State and the government in general by being sued and embarrassed.

So, I would say that we need to take a look at something that's as unique as possible, that would give us the same result in terms of reflection etc., the best we can do it; but something that's not so problematic in terms of identification. Something that we don't have to worry about seeing many of, unless we go to Nevada or someplace else. I really say this sincerely, because I think it would be difficult for me to support -- and if it's a decision that has to come before the legislative body -- colors that I just see all the time. And I don't even have to go far to do that. I mean New Jersey, you know, we have a lot of visitors to our "Garden State." Even in Newark we have a lot of visitors, and all the plates are starting to look alike to me. And I certainly don't want to be a duplication -- coming from the City of Newark and Irvington -- of New York. New York does everything they can to hurt this State's identification, and I don't want people to keep calling New Jersey, "The City of Newark, New York." We're different, and we're proud of being different.

I just need to say that for the record, Mr. Chairman, because that uniqueness is very important. If not, we're right back where we started, 18 million, 15 million out, an administrative nightmare. And when we do the statistics at the end of the year, by the end of the time period we're going to find out there's no difference in the safety factor, no difference in the crime factor. If there's a difference at all, more than likely there has been an increase in substantial injuries, substantial crime, because we weren't able to do the two things that we wanted to do: reduce the probability of

harm to people and property, and reduce the crime. If we're not going to do those things to plates, we don't need them.

CHIEF PARENTI: If I may Senator Rice, because of what New York did, and because of what Pennsylvania did, we're recommending going back to the straw and black plate, and it also eliminates the problem of having another set of plates out there.

SENATOR GRAVES: All right, could you find someplace that could produce some of these for us, so we could see exactly?

CHIEF PARENTI: Yes sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: We could give one to each one of the legislators to take a look at, from this committee.

CHIEF PARENTI: I will arrange to have--

SENATOR GRAVES: I said before 100. We need at least 150.

CHIEF PARENTI: One hundred fifty of a couple of different types of plates, is that what you're saying?

SENATOR GRAVES: Well, what you're suggesting and what Colonel Pagano suggested.

CHIEF PARENTI: We're going to suggest a change in the configuration of it too. Again, you can see some of letters and numbers here, when you look at the plate--

SENATOR GRAVES: But do it. Try to do it--

CHIEF PARENTI: I'll do it the way I think it should be.

SENATOR GRAVES: --and see if it you can present it to us.

CHIEF PARENTI: Okay.

SENATOR BUBBA: Can't you get together with the Division and Pagano so that everybody agrees with one thing, and we work forward?

CHIEF PARENTI: Yes.

SENATOR GRAVES: Maybe two or three months from now. In other words -- for all intents it's August 1st-- How about the first week in November, or the latter part of October?

CHIEF PARENTI: Yes, I'll work on it.

SENATOR GRAVES: Just a sample of something, so that we have something more than just trying to fix it in our mind. I want to wrap this up at one o'clock, so I want to give everyone here a chance to talk.

CHIEF PARENTI: Just one other point.

SENATOR GRAVES: Sure.

CHIEF PARENTI: I do want to address that photo license thing too, but back to you, Senator Rice. On the social security number, your 1934 is you. The 150 said where you were living at the time you got your social security number. However, someone in California won't start off with 150, they may start off with 450, but they'll also have 1934 at the tail end. So if that California person moves to New Jersey, now you've got a problem. It's the entire social security number that identifies the individual, not any small set of numbers.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay Chief.

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chairman? Well, we're going to look into it anyway. What's the middle number? Is that a number that moves around also?

CHIEF PARENTI: Yes. That number will move around according to where the social security number was issued at the time.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay.

CHIEF PARENTI: Photo licensing?

SENATOR GRAVES: No chief. I think we've all agreed to put it on the back burner until I, as the Chairman, feel that the Division of Motor Vehicles could live with the problem, if I get enough support to hand it to them again. But they're not ready, by any stretch of the imagination. And



right now the Attorney General is out arresting people smoking marijuana, and I don't want to give him any more problems.

CHIEF PARENTI: Okay, one final comment then, I would be very remiss if I didn't do this in view of some of the things I heard this morning. From a law enforcement standpoint, Motor Vehicle hasn't improved 80%, but 100%, because the lives of the police officers are on the line when we ask the computer for a number and it comes back to the wrong person. And I have to say this, Senator, since Mr. Paulsen has taken over the control of the Motor Vehicle Division, that no longer exists. We are comfortable now that when we ask the computer for information, we are going to get accurate information back.

SENATOR GRAVES: Oh, there's improvement there, there's no two ways about it.

CHIEF PARENTI: There's no question about it. From a law enforcement standpoint, it's a 100%. Thank you.

SENATOR GRAVES: Jim Hughes? Jim hold it to five minutes.

J A M E S F. H U G H E S: I'm Jim Hughes from the State Safety Council. I'm not going to reiterate what's been said already this morning. We at the Council have been involved with this reflectorized plate question going back to the 1970s. We served on the commission which Chief Parenti chaired in 1984. All through our traffic safety committees throughout the State, Senator, there is strong support for a reflectorized plate, basically from the standpoint of safety, and particularly for breakdowns at night. We want to make it known here today that we support the issuance of a reflectorized plate, and we request that you do everything possible to get it on the road as quickly as possible.

SENATOR GRAVES: If we get cooperation from the Attorney General and the Director of Motor Vehicles, we'll be able to do it by next July 1st.

MR. HUGHES: Thank you.

SENATOR GRAVES: It's entirely up to them.

MR. HUGHES: Very good.

SENATOR GRAVES: So the idea is to get all of minds to meet, because we've established the foundation that we all want to do it. Now, all we have to agree on is how to do it.

MR. HUGHES: Thank you.

SENATOR BUBBA: Senator Graves, before Mr. Katz-- I just want to personally thank you for your outline of a plate.

SENATOR GRAVES: Is that it? Is that a reflectorized straw background?

SENATOR BUBBA: Yes. What Joe Katz has done is recommend that each and every one of our districts have the Senator's name appear on the plate. I think that's a very good idea. (laughter) Is that true?

SENATOR BASSANO: Mr. Chairman, I see problems if we were to issue that plate over again, because there would be confusion if some of the old plates don't come off the road and remain on vehicles. If we're going to change the plates I'm afraid that we're going to have to change at least one of the colors. I would have to feel that it's going to cause law enforcement problems if we went back to that particular designation. That's just an opinion, but I think that's going to create some problems.

SENATOR GRAVES: Mr. Katz?

J O S E P H K A T Z: (inaudible comment from audience)

SENATOR GRAVES: You can't speak there because they won't pick it up. We want to get you on the record, Katz.

MR. KATZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee. I didn't want to testify officially because we would be among the vendors trying to sell them. I represent the 3M Company. But we have heard the pains of the various police groups, particularly State Police, talking about going back to the straw and black, and we played around with that.

That is somewhat different, Senator Bassano, than what you see. (shows samples of license plates) The letters are three inches high. The current standard letters are two and three quarters. We also played around with the size of the New Jersey, to make it more evident. Senator Rice wants to make sure that New Jersey is distinctive. In addition to the unique colors that Chief Parenti pointed out, this would hit with the New Jersey. This is just one idea. You could change the size of the letters or numbers, but essentially that's the reflective version of the straw and black.

SENATOR GRAVES: Well this portrays, to me at least, what Colonel Pagano-- It's the difference of absolute eclipse in being able to see something.

MR. KATZ: There's a daylight shot there too.

SENATOR GRAVES: Yes, I saw the daylight.

MR. KATZ: I think you may have seen them, Director.

MR. PAULSEN: I think that's a daylight shot, isn't it Joe?

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay.

MR. KATZ: I can leave that with you.

SENATOR BASSANO: The only point that I was concerned about is that unless there's some great distinction in the new plate, the fact that you're going back to an old color designation that is still on the road, is going to cause law enforcement some problems. I think that has to be considered.

MR. PAULSEN: Or cause us another phase in terms of getting those back, which is significantly labor intensive.

SENATOR BASSANO: Yes, because from a far distance the plate may look perfectly legal because the color designation will be the same as some of those that are on the road now. It's something that has to be considered if we're going to consider going back to this designation of straw and black.

SENATOR GRAVES: But if there's any doubt in anybody's mind about what a reflectorized plate shoots off as compared to none-- I don't know whether a newspaper could print it or not, or TV, but it certainly portrays-- Mr. Jerlat? Mr. Jerlat you have five minutes. We're going to hold it to the license plate at this time, because the license plate--

W I L L I A M J E R L A T: Well, if you're on the license plate, I'll defer to whatever is going on here, because we're here prepared for the problem with the driver's license, and photo driver's license.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, which there are plenty of, undoubtedly.

MR. JERLAT: Yes.

SENATOR GRAVES: But the Director points out to us by January he feels he's going to have -- when the present contract expires -- a new presentation of the photo and the non photo driver's license. So, I think what he should do is give that information out to us, what he intends to do. I guess he has also started getting some bidding prescriptions ready. I think we all share them with you. We'll let our staff member share with you anything that's coming in so that you have a chance to give your input.

MR. JERLAT: The thing that we're concerned with, Senator, I think that even with a change in the driver's license -- no matter what they're going to do with it -- I don't think it's going to eliminate the problem out there that the licensee faces. This is the area that we want to address; what's happening with that licensee, and the problem with the issuance of drivers' licenses that are illegal drivers' licenses, they have duplicates or whatever, and the fluctuation of moving. That's the reason why we're here to support the two pieces of legislation that you put in, very very strongly. That's what we're really interested in. As far as the license plates are concerned, that's kind of an issue that's very interesting, but this is not what we came down to address.

SENATOR GRAVES: On 3354, we couldn't release it today -- or 3455 -- even if we wanted to. We have to wait to do it back in Trenton.

MR. JERLAT: Oh you're going to have another hearing on this then?

SENATOR GRAVES: Oh yes.

MR. JERLAT: All right, well suppose we hold it back until that time.

SENATOR GRAVES: Senator Bassano?

SENATOR BASSANO: If we're talking on those two bills, I do want to comment if I can, very briefly. Many times the Legislature, in its infinite wisdom, passes some good laws; and I think the two bills that are before us are excellent. The problem is getting the information out to the general public that the law has been changed. I'm going to suggest an amendment to both of your bills. That is, in light of the fact that 17-year-olds are given a license for four years, and that they have to take their photograph to receive that license, that you consider amending your bill so that when that photograph is taken they be given at that time a copy of this law, so that they know right up-front exactly what the law is when it comes to forging licenses. It's a suggestion, to try to get that information out to the public. These bills are designed to affect the young people because that's where the problem is, and the best way to do that is to hand them a piece of paper and say to them when they take that picture, this is the law. It's a suggestion. I hope you consider it.

SENATOR GRAVES: Yes. I think we can even give it a priority. We'll try to get permission to have a meeting before our next session, which is to amend these two bills and release them so we can get them to the floor. Okay, Mr. Jerlat--

MR. JERLAT: Thank you.

SENATOR GRAVES: I would say that you're going to have a hearing on this in August.

MR. JERLAT: Very good. We appreciate it.

SENATOR GRAVES: Let's try to get the Senate President's okay. Fred Guarnieri, are you here? Are you on the photo driver's license too? (affirmative response) Okay?

FRED GUARNIERI: (speaking from the audience) I would just add the New Jersey liquor stores support of your bill. We have a written statement, if they would accept that?

SENATOR GRAVES: Sure we will. Give us the written statement.

MR. GUARNIERI: (indiscernible) --I have presented that to your staff. Thank you very much.

SENATOR GRAVES: Figure that -- if we can get the Senate President's okay -- we'll just take these two bills up, and maybe before some afternoon meeting. We'll try for August. I think we're going to go into session, August 10th is it? Or August 6th? What is it? August 6th. We'll try, and she'll ask Kathy Crotty if the Senate President will let us meet for a half hour beforehand on it. Okay who's next? Ralph Bonnano. You're a collector of license plates? You have two minutes sir.

RALPH C. BONNANO: I would like the Senator to take a look at this. This is a chart put out in the newsletter of our organization, of which I am a member. That is a display of all the current plates that are out on the road, that have been released within the last year, or will be released sometime this year. As you can see some of them are getting pretty far from the basic idea of vehicle identification, particularly the one from Florida.

SENATOR RICE: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. What's the organization you are a member of?

MR. BONNANO: ALPCA, The Automobile License Plate Collectors Association. It's a nonprofit organization of enthusiasts. I've been researching, and had an interest in license plates -- particularly in the State of New Jersey --

for a number of years, as I pointed out in my letter to the Chairman. Having done some research, I don't claim to be an expert on them but I feel that I could offer some input into the selection process of a new plate.

I think one of our problems has to be, again, with the overlapping of series. We have three different types on the road now. Florida has just begun an issuance of passenger plates with the same format of 3/2/1.

SENATOR GRAVES: This looks like a rainbow. There's is a multiple colored plate.

MR. BONNANO: Well, they have two plates out now, one with the space shuttle on it, and one with the map base -- which is the general issue. The space shuttle one is commemorative and an additional cost. But again, it comes down to the simple matter of confusion. For example, the non passenger plates in our State -- the commercial plates -- are prefixed with an "X." If for example -- I think I pointed it out -- if there is an incident where a person needs to get a number off the commercial vehicle, and all they get is the "X" there's eight different formats of the commercial plates out on the road at present. All with "X" in the first spot, with from five numbers, to one number and four letters, and every combination thereof. Again, it's a simple matter of confusion.

The other thing would be, they talked about larger numbers on the plates. If you are going to do that -- and I noticed that they were made visible on the samples -- would be to silkscreen, would be not to emboss the State name, or just eliminate the slogan, or just silkscreen that as well. That would enable us to manufacture larger numbers, again keeping in mind the visibility factor and the legibility factor. As far as issuance would be -- as they mentioned earlier -- going back to 1959, which would be a general issue. I'm not sure what the statistics were, but they got all the old plates, '52 bases -- 1952 and '57 bases -- off the road in a year and a half. Back then they allocated so many in the series to new registrants.

SENATOR GRAVES: There's twice as many vehicles now, though.

MR. BONNANO: Yes, by all means.

SENATOR GRAVES: I think a realistic 30 months that the Director pointed out would be something that we could all-- (inaudible)

MR. BONNANO: By all mean it would be that much more complex because of the number of vehicles. They allocated so many for new registrants, and the rest, within a certain series, they mailed out depending on the registrant's last name, the beginning letters of the last name. A lot of those plates are still on the road. A lot of them are awfully beaten up, and just as a matter of consequence should be removed.

SENATOR GRAVES: Are you supportive of the reflectorized license plates?

MR. BONNANO: By all means. By all means,

SENATOR GRAVES: Do you think it will increase the safety on the roads?

MR. BONNANO: Increase safety, visibility, and bring us in conformity with the rest of the United States, and all of North America.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay.

MR. BONNANO: Kentucky is the only other state that does not have reflectorized plates, but will be issuing so beginning in January.

SENATOR GRAVES: They have a good horse race.

MR. BONNANO: Yes. In fact, they're going to have Churchill Downs on their license plates as of January 1st.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay, thank you. Is there anyone from the general public who would like to give their views, whether it be supportive or critical? Did the Troopers that are still here-- Did you have anything that was pertinent to this that we may have missed, that the Colonel was depending on you to present to us?



UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF AUDIENCE: No sir.

SENATOR GRAVES: Okay. I think we clearly have established, from a public safety point of view, from law enforcement officers, and from the general public itself -- and I think no better words can be used than what the Colonel has said, that it's dead, it should have been buried, and should have over with -- meaning this license plate. What it entails now is cooperation. The legislative process has gone through designating that it wants something done, and the administration process has placed certain hurdles -- for good reason, that this is not criticism -- you know, to involve the public in something else, when you can't even give them a proper presentation of what they're entitled to-- I think I agree that we're in much better shape than we were before, and we're getting to the point where we can involve ourselves in what this -- I don't want to say is of crisis nature, but on a scale of 10 it's certainly at 8. Something has to be done with New Jersey's license plate to increase the safety on the highways, not only for law enforcement, for the people that are in that car -- the taillights may be out or something like that, or something in that particular category. So if we all agree that we should change it, then the best way to do it without confrontation is to involve ourselves in the change. I don't know that it will take any more legislative -- except maybe by resolution--

MR. PAULSEN: Oh yes sir. That whole cost issue needs to be clarified.

SENATOR GRAVES: Yes. I was going to say, and clearly outlining how it should be done.

MR. PAULSEN: At the same time, I think that if in fact the program is going to be implemented, the policy makers should make the determination as to the plate.

SENATOR GRAVES: What was your last word, Director?

MR. PAULSEN: As to the plate, and what it looks like. You're actively interested in that, and I think that that decision is an appropriate one for the policy makers; for the reasons that Senator Bassano said. For us at DMV it would be much more difficult to go back to the straw and black. It can be done, but it is much more difficult.

SENATOR GRAVES: I think we invite the public to participate in this, to write to the legislative process to our office in Trenton, of a suggestion that they might have for license plate color scheme. The plate has to be the same size for the whole country, but the public is invited to send in what they feel would be a best presentation of color scheme to your office, and then the Committee can meet and go over it and give whatever has some fact and background, to you. So we have to involve ourselves -- as you said --- in the cost, because if want to defer it and not put it at general expense -- that a one shot deal of the user -- and as Senator Bubba clearly pointed out, that the person knows that upon renewal the following year, that that extra cost is no longer there--

MR. PAULSEN: Understand, but--

SENATOR GRAVES: --that it was a one shot deal -- if it's \$2.50 that--

MR. PAULSEN: Senator, please, this one point I didn't make, and if you just bear with me for one minute-- Again we are the artisans. We will do the work, provided the resources, in accordance with the plan that we have set forth. Irrespective of whether the costs are passed on in some fashion -- and that decision will be made by the policy makers -- or whether they're absorbed, the Division of Motor Vehicles will still need appropriations. For FY 1989 we need an appropriation -- and these appear on the second page of the overview -- of \$1,900,000; FY 1990: \$8.2 million; for FY 1991: 7.5 million, for a total of 18.7 million that we set forth. We can't operate without that appropriation either way. That

accordingly will require discussions between the policy makers and the Treasurer's office and the Governor's office. Again, we stand prepared to do the program, if the policy makers make the determination that this is a program of the priority that you indicate and should be done.

SENATOR GRAVES: Well, do I see any shrinking of the thoughts-- As each Senator pronounced, I thought there was full support for the Colonel's outline.

SENATOR BUBBA: Senator Graves, I don't think it's ever been a policy of this Committee to hide behind any issue or not take a strong stand. I think the stand that we've made is damn strong enough. I think you clearly have indicated the need for the license plate, and Pagano and a number of speakers have indicated the need. This Committee never shirks its duty. I'm ready to vote. I'm ready to move the legislation. I'm ready to support it, and I think everybody on this Committee is.

SENATOR GRAVES: So it's bipartisan support from us unanimously, that we want to do something about it, and she'll have to translate this into words with your staff. We'll have to put it into statutory form of how we think the money should be provided, that it shouldn't be from general revenue, that the user has a one shot cost for providing what might be a lifetime license plate, which might also be translated into a lifesaving license plate for that particular vehicle or any kind of an accident.

Okay, what would the second step? The second step is to implement it. So, we're going to accept what you said should be our part; and that is to clearly outline what we want, translate it into statutory authority, and send it up through the process of legislation to the Governor's desk, and take any of the brunt of the criticism that might be forthcoming, The only thing that we want to do is clearly outline what type of a plate, and we're asking the public to

participate in that. Send in your suggestions to the Director of Motor Vehicles, to the staff of the New Jersey State Senate, and let it be something -- not a contest. We're not having a contest, and I hope it's held down to only 10,000 people participate, but clearly out there there's a lot of good thinking. And we want to tap that reservoir of thinking on what is going to be the license plate for a generation in the State of New Jersey.

SENATOR BUBBA: Mr. Chairman, I just want it clearly understood, by the Director, and whomever else is within earshot, that I made no commitment for \$18 million by my support of a license plate. What I committed to was the cost of the plate to be born by the vehicle owner, on a one-time basis.

SENATOR GRAVES: In the neighborhood of two bucks.

SENATOR RICE: Another thing, Mr. Chairman, if I may add. It's only fair, because that two bucks will make the difference whether or not we get that vehicle back or get that vehicle before it leaves. It will make the difference between a life and death situation, which costs a lot more. I think that just looking at what people are doing -- not even addressing license plates. If you look at the idea-- I believe you mentioned that 30% of the people who are New Jersey's drivers, on their own volition, opt to get picture IDs-- Is that correct?

MR. PAULSEN: Fifteen percent. Thirty percent have them, but the first license is mandatory.

SENATOR RICE: Okay. You see the point I'm making is that if that number of people opt to do something that wasn't even mandatory, I think if you look at it from a statistical probability -- at least an analytic point of view -- that's a heck of a sampling of population as to where the people's mentality is. And I got a feeling that the same thing would happen with the reflectorized plate, particularly once the public is aware of the justification behind it, what it means

for them. We lose two bucks every day. I just came from Paris and they ripped me off for 300, so I mean I'd rather spend the two. My point is that this Committee, as was said, will go out there and address that issue, but it's up to the administration to make sure that we don't really "BS" the people. Give them real facts. Two dollars can mean the difference between a \$30,000 Mercedes-- Two dollars can mean the difference between whether or not the youngster who was taking it out of the parking lot, and the young lady jumped on the hood -- apprehended quickly. That's what two dollars means in the State of New Jersey, for that plate; and it's worth every penny of it.

SENATOR GRAVES: In closing, Senator Bassano?

SENATOR BASSANO: No comment, except the fact that I do support making some changes.

SENATOR GRAVES: The administration has offered that we walk hand in hand to solve this problem. We accept it. Stay for lunch, we're going to talk. The meeting is adjourned.

MR. PAULSEN: Thank you very much.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)



## APPENDIX





## ISSUE

The current unreflectorized buff on blue color of New Jersey's motor vehicle license plate has drawn criticism, particularly from the New Jersey law enforcement community that cites safety, identification and visibility problems with the plate, particularly at night. Frequently, reflectorization and color are discussed as separate parameters of plate visibility, however from a law enforcement perspective, both are crucial issues in the vital task of plate identification. A license plate that may be aesthetically attractive is an identification failure if it can neither be seen nor read with a reliable degree of accuracy. License plates were designed and intended as a form of vehicle identification, not as a tourism advertisement. Anything which adversely affects one's ability to read a license plate detracts from that plates primary purpose: identification.

There are numerous parameters affecting license plate "read ability" such as the alphanumeric arrangement or the number of license plates required (one versus two plates). However, the two key issues affecting New Jersey's current plate are color and reflectorization. These two areas are directly related to the reported identification problems cited by the law enforcement community.

The current "buff on blue" which replaced the "black on straw" color in 1979 has been characterized as unreadable in both

daylight and at nighttime causing plate identification problems.

Perhaps further exacerbating the unreadability of the buff on blue color is the fact that New Jersey's plate is unreflectorized. In fact, New Jersey is the last remaining state not to utilize either a fully reflectorized or beads on paint reflectorized license plate.

These two issues will be discussed as to their impact on law enforcement ability to effectively enforce the law and their overall impact upon highway safety.

#### BACKGROUND

##### COLOR

In 1979, New Jersey implemented the current buff on blue color license plates, ending an unbroken 20 year stretch of the black on straw color. The change was initiated by then Governor Byrne who wanted to utilize the states colors to generate pride in New Jersey.

Prior to implementation, a staff study was completed by the New Jersey State Police which strongly advised against the color change citing law enforcement familiarity with the black on straw color. None-the-less, the color change was implemented and, at present, there are approximately 6 million sets of buff on blue license plates on the road.

### REFLECTORIZATION

The concept of reflectorization is neither unique, nor new. In 1947, Connecticut adopted a "beads on paint" partially reflectorized license plate, and in 1950, Maine implemented a fully reflectorized license plate. New Jersey briefly experimented with plate reflectorization in 1968 and 1969 but the program was unexpectedly stopped, although there are still hundreds of black on straw reflectorized license plates still active. Since then however, every state including the District of Columbia has gone to either a fully reflectorized or "beads on paint" reflectorized license plate. New Jersey is the only remaining state not to use some form of reflectorized license plate.

Bills have been introduced in the New Jersey Assembly proposing the adoption of reflectorized license plates. As far back as 1977, Assembly Bill Number A-3297 called for the issuance of reflectorized license plates.

In 1981, Title 39:3-33 was amended to call for the adoption of reflectorized plates. According to the law, as of January 1, 1982 all motor vehicle license plates "shall be fully treated with a reflectorized material". The statute indicates that the cost of the motorist shall not exceed 5¢ over the actual cost of the reflectorization. Failure to implement this statute may be due to executive-legislative conflict in the cost of the program.

## DISCUSSION

### HIGHWAY SAFETY

The initial impetus towards license plate reflectorization was motivated, in part, by the anticipated safety benefit it would afford drivers, particularly at nighttime. In simple terms, reflectorized license plates are more visible than non-reflectorized license plates. According to the Society of Automotive Engineers, reflectorized license plates far exceed the minimum standard of candle power required as part of a vehicle's rear signal system. One study indicated that a reflectorized license plate was detectable from approximately 1500 feet or about 5 times the detectability distance of an unreflectorized plate.

Although there have been no recent studies done examining the safety benefits of reflectorized license plates, most likely because many states have already gone to reflectorization, four (4) early studies clearly and dramatically highlighted the safety benefits of reflectorized license plates, particularly in preventing nighttime parked vehicle accidents. These studies are reviewed in Appendix Number 1.

An examination of New Jersey fatalities indicates that in 1986, 49% occurred during the hours of darkness. Considering that the hours of darkness represent only 40% of the total day, it is apparent that nighttime fatalities occurred at an alarmingly disproportionate rate.

Lighting failure has been found to be a causation factor in rear end accidents three times as often than in all other accidents. Reflectorized license plates as part of the rear lighting system would greatly reduce the number and severity of rear end accidents. So far in 1987 (January thru May), the New Jersey State Police have issued over 2600 summonses and thousands of written warnings for lighting violations. Reflectorized license plates, both front and rear, act as valuable identifiers for approaching motorists. As visible reflectors they enable the approaching motorist to place that vehicle in perspective which is extremely vital should another part of that vehicle's lighting system not be functioning.

#### VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION

License plates were intended as a means of vehicle identification. Any process that improves plate legibility or clarity improves vehicle identification. Reflectorization and visual clarity are perhaps the two most important aspects of license plates with respect to an individuals' ability to accurately identify that vehicle. License plates are an essential tool in vehicle identification, often the only means of positively identifying a vehicle involved in the commission of a crime or hit and run accident. A reflectorized and legible license plate is essential in a witness's recollection of a vehicle. From a law enforcement perspective, however, license

plates have a far greater value than simple vehicle identification.

According to a 1979 I.A.C.P. survey, police agencies reported that license plates were useful in a variety of law enforcement efforts, not only the traditional area of traffic control. For example, license plates have a role in narcotics investigations, street crime and even organized crime investigations. Reflectorized plates are also harder to counterfeit.

Any improvement in plate visibility, such as plate reflectorization, will increase police ability to identify license plates, thus aiding overall law enforcement. Reflectorized license plates are not only more durable and thus last longer, but actually remain cleaner than enamel plates. One area that periodically receives a great deal of attention is high speed pursuit. Having a reflectorized and highly legible license plate would greatly add to the information available to the police officer involved in a pursuit. Plate recognition may possibly be the crucial determinant in evaluating whether or not to continue that pursuit.

Police officers responding to a call for assistance are trained to note vehicle license plates as they near the origin of the call whether it be a motor vehicle accident or a crime. Vehicles departing that scene may be involved, yet the only means

available for identification is a motor vehicle license plate. If the plates are neither reflectorized, nor clear and legible, they are useless.

A vital part of highway safety is speed enforcement, of which RADAR plays an important role. Police officers utilizing RADAR for speed enforcement must identify an approaching vehicle often at closing speeds in excess of 100 mph. Only a reflectorized license plate can be identified at that closing speed. A study done by the California Highway Patrol revealed that unreflectorized license plates were not readable at closure speeds of 80 mph, and only partially readable at closure speeds of 60 mph.

#### TROOPER SAFETY

Calling in motor vehicle stops, whether it be a parked or moving vehicle, particularly at night, is an extremely important safety precaution. The sooner the license plate is identified and radioed in, the faster the information can be available to that trooper making the stop. Reflectorized and legible license plates simply increase the amount of time available to the trooper to assess a particular motor vehicle stop as the plates can be seen from a greater distance and with more clarity.

### COSTS OF LICENSE PLATE REFLECTORIZATION

While it is generally conceded that reflectorized license plates increase vehicle identification and highway safety, that benefit does carry a significant per plate cost. According to the Division of Motor Vehicles, the cost of manufacturing a reflectorized license plate increases the per set cost 93%, from \$1.16 to \$2.25. There are between 5 and 6 million sets that would have to be replaced. In addition to the actual cost, administrative costs depending on the system of replacement (recall versus phase-in) must also be taken into consideration. The approximate cost of implementing a reflectorized plate program is \$18,724,308., according to the Division of Motor Vehicles.

Although the overall cost of the program is significant, a study by the Department of Transportation reveals that when it comes to vehicle safety, most owners would not hesitate to spend up to \$100. on motor vehicle safety equipment, such as airbags. As reflectorized plate sets cost only \$1.09 more than the current enamel sets, most motorists would probably favor absorbing the small cost for the proven safety benefit of plate reflectorization. Reflectorized plates would form an integral part of a motor vehicles overall lighting package.



POSITION

New Jersey is the last remaining state not to utilize reflective license plates. Support for license plate reflectorization comes not only from the law enforcement community. In fact, the following agencies have issued policy statements in support of license plate reflectorization:

U.S. Department of Transportation

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators

National Sheriff's Association

International Association of Chiefs of Police

National Safety Council

National Association of Governor's Highway Safety

Representatives

National Association of Women Highway Safety Leaders

International Conference of Police Associations

New Jersey Traffic Officers Association

The benefits of clear and legible reflective plates extend far beyond the immediate benefits to highway safety and into almost every aspect of police work. From narcotics investigations to accident reconstruction, license plates play a vital role in

law enforcement. The New Jersey State Police support reflectorization, not only because it's a proven safety measure, but because of its value in all aspects of law enforcement.

## APPENDIX NUMBER 1

1. In Minnesota, a comparison was made of nighttime rear end collisions in the years 1955 and 1957 (before and after plate reflectorization). It was found that the percentage of rear end nighttime collisions decreased from 36% to 32% of the total number of rear end collisions. The reduction in urban rear end nighttime fatalities was even more dramatic, falling from 28% to only 7% of all fatalities involving parked vehicles.

2. In Maine, a study compared the annual averages of nighttime parked vehicle and nighttime parked vehicle fatalities in the years preceeding the adoption of reflectorized license plates and those after. Both resulted in 58% reductions.

3. In Polk County, Iowa, 60,000 reflectorized license plates were issued out of the approximately 100,000 total license plates in the county during 1959. The following year, the accident records of the reflectorized versus non-reflectorized plates were compared and it was found that for nighttime parked car accidents, over 75% involved the non-reflectorized plate although the non-reflectorized plates only accounted for 40% of the total plate population.

4. At the beginning of 1967, accident statistics were maintained comparing the involvement of reflectorized versus non-reflectorized license plates during a 6 week change over

period in North Carolina. This comparison showed that reflectorized plates were effective in reducing nighttime rear end collisions.

New Jersey Division of Motor Vehicles  
Department of Law and Public Safety  
Overview  
Proposed Reflectorized License Plate Program  
July 21, 1987

If it is determined by the state's policymakers that a reflectorized license plate program is in the best interest of the public, the attached statement details how such a program could be implemented by the Division of Motor Vehicles. Under the proposed plan, which would begin in July 1988, all New Jersey vehicles would have fully treated, reflectorized plates by December 31, 1990.

The cost to implement a reflectorized plate program would be \$18.7 million above the cost of the present nonreflectorized plate program. If the program is fully implemented the additional cost to maintain it would be approximately \$1.3 million per year. This cost is based on the difference between production costs for the old plates (\$1.16 per set) and the production costs for the new, reflectorized plates (\$2.25 per set), multiplied by the number of new sets of plates issued per year (1.2 million).

The first phase of the program, which would run from July 1, 1988 through January 1, 1989, would include activities related to the preliminary steps necessary to prepare for general development and distribution of the reflectorized plates. This phase would include: hiring and training of personnel; acquiring sufficient space in the division's central headquarters in Trenton to house a Reflectorized Plate Unit, as well as all necessary equipment needed to process the plates; preparation and distribution of information to the motoring public about the new program changes, and completion of appropriate computer system changes.

The total cost for Phase I is projected at \$338,270.

During Phase II, which would run from January 1, 1989 through December 31, 1989, a motorists registering their vehicles for the first time (approximately 1.2 million) would receive reflectorized plates. The 500,000 special and government plates currently in circulation would be replaced with the new reflectorized plates and mailed from the DMV central headquarters in Trenton. Additional personnel hired in Phase I would handle the operation. Phase III personnel would be hired during this period, as well.

The total cost of Phase II would be approximately \$3,101,429.

Phase III, the last leg of the implementation cycle, would run from January 1, 1990 through December 31, 1990. Plate replacement for the 5.2 million renewal applicants would be processed according to the normal monthly registration system already established. The estimated 1.2 million new drivers who register annually would also be issued reflectorized plates during this phase.

The cost of implementing Phase III would be approximately \$15,285,509.

Funding for the reflectorized plate program, mandated under New Jersey law, has been requested for the 1989 fiscal year. Additional costs for the reflectorization program through fiscal year 1991 are: FY 1989: \$1,939,699; FY 1990: \$8,285,509; and, FY 1991: \$7,500,000. Total: \$18,725,208.

# # #

## NEW JERSEY MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION PLATES

### I. Reflectorization

- A. Title 39:3-33 mandates that a "fully treated" reflectorized vehicle identification plate be required on all vehicles as of January 1, 1982.
  - 1. DMV has addressed the reflectorized plate issue in the past, however, funds were not appropriated for the program.
  - 2. An implementation package has been prepared and funding requested for consideration in the FY 1989 budget process.
- B. Reflectorization can be accomplished in 2 ways.
  - 1. Beading is a process in which reflectorized beading is dropped on to a raised wet plate surface and then baked until annealed.
    - a. the porous beads rub off easily
    - b. the plate does not weather well
    - c. the plate can not be clear coated
    - d. of the two, this process is 25¢ less expensive per pair of plates to process
    - e. the plate does not satisfy the requirement of a fully treated surface
    - f. nine/fifty states use this method
  - 2. Sheeting is a process in which a reflectorized film is applied to the plate surface before embossing and then dipped into a clear lacquer.
    - a. the plate is weather proof
    - b. the plate is resilient under normal road conditions
    - c. all road and traffic signs use this process.
    - d. satisfies Title 39:3-33 mandate of a fully treated surface
    - e. permits the use of graphic designs in plate manufacture
    - f. State Use Industry has experience in this process
    - g. forty/fifty states use this method

3. There are several vendors of reflectorized materials.
  - a. Flex-o-Lite Corporation, Division of Lukene Steel, St. Louis, Missouri, is the major supplier of reflective beading
  - b. Seibulite of America Incorporated, California produces reflectorized beading
  - c. Avery International, Gainsville, Ohio produces reflectorized sheeting material
  - d. 3 M Company, St. Paul, Minnesota produces a reflectorized sheeting material
  - e. Sake International, Tokyo, Japan, produces a reflectorized sheeting material

4. Cost comparison includes:

	CURRENT COSTS NO REFLECTORIZATION	PROJECTED COSTS WITH REFLECTORIZATION	
		BEADING	SHEETING
PRICE PER SET	\$1.16	\$2.00	\$2.25

Plate costs were quoted by State Use Industries and include labor, space, equipment and raw material costs for all categories. State Use Industries advised that reflectorization costs are based upon 1986 cost data. There is no anticipated cost increase for 1987. (No information available as to whether a cost increase/decrease will occur in 1988 or succeeding years.)

II. Implementation: General Issuance

A. Assumptions

1. D M V data base has been fully stabilized
2. adequate motorist education has occurred
3. a totally new plate is to be introduced
4. a continuation of the present series of alpha/numerics will be continued
5. total reflectorization of all plates will result from a three phase process to be completed by Dec. 31, 1990



B. Phase I - July 1, 1988 through January 1, 1989

Phase I entails the preliminary stages necessary before general issuance can begin. This includes hiring and training of necessary personnel; acquisition of sufficient space and necessary equipment; informing the motoring public and performing the necessary system changes. The following specific tasks must be accomplished during this phase:

1. State Use Industry completes the bid process, acquires necessary equipment and raw materials, recruits additional personnel and begins manufacturing reflectorized plate inventory
2. D M V acquires work space for the Central Office Reflectorized Plate Unit in the Trenton area [1,272 sq. ft]
3. D M V posts, recruits and trains additional personnel (8 additional employees)
4. D M V prepares and distributes new plate information to the general motoring public (mail inserts, brochures, posters, paid advertising, etc.)
5. D M V establishes telephone link for plate related questions (present plan calls for use of existing resources)
6. D M V acquires additional equipment (office furniture, computer equipment)
7. D M V/O T I S prepare and implement new computer programs necessary for new plate issuance (at least 5 software system changes)
8. D M V dedicates and prepares storage for inventory of new plates (existing space available)

C. Implementation Costs for Phase I

1. Additional Personnel - Central Office Reflectorized Plate Unit

4 Senior Data Entry Operators	[A10]	@ \$15,049 for 3 months	\$ 18,811
2 Principal Data Entry Operators	[R14]	@ \$18,315 for 3 months	\$ 4,579
1 Supervisor	[R21]	@ \$25,776 for 4 months	\$ 8,589
1 Coordinator	[R27]	@ \$34,500 for 6 months	\$ 17,250
8 employees		Sub Total	<u>\$ 49,229</u>

2. Computer Software Changes \$100,00
3. Public Information Program \$150,00
4. Equipment Costs

a.	Office Furniture			
	6 CRT work stations with chairs			
		@ \$1,535 =	\$9,210	
	2 desks with chair	@ \$ 344 =	\$ 668	
		Sub Total		\$ 9,8
b.	Computer Equipment			
	6 CRT's	@ \$ 875 =	\$5,250	
	6 Printers	@ \$ 565 =	\$3,390	
	1 Controller	@ \$7,000 =	\$7,000	
	1 Modem	@ \$ 225 =	\$ 225	
	1 Data Line	@ \$ 600 =	\$ 600	
		Sub Total		\$ 16,4
c.	Computer Equipment Maintenance			
	6 months	@ \$ 383/month		\$ 2,2
5.	Personnel Work Space Leasing Costs - Central Office			
a.	1,272 sq. ft.	@ \$15 per sq. ft./year		
		for 6 months		\$ 9,5
		Total Cost Phase I		\$337,4

D. Phase II January 1, 1989 - December 31, 1989

Phase II begins the general issuance of the new reflectorized plate by DMV. The issuance of 1,200,000 initial transactions (i.e., new registrations) will take place at local agencies and will require no additional personnel. The 500,000 special and official plates will be recalled and new plates issued via the mail at DMV central office operation. Additional personnel hired in Phase I will handle this operation. Additional personnel necessary for Phase III will be phased in during this period. Plate inventory build up for Phase III will also occur in this time frame. The following specific tasks must be accomplished during this phase:

1. all initial and replacement (lost, stolen or defaced) plates will be issued (1.2 million sets of plates)
2. all government, personalized, no fee, and courtesy plates will be reissued in the new plate design (500,000 sets of plates)
3. State Use will establish a double shift to meet anticipated DMV needs in Phase II and Phase III (8.1 million sets of plates) Double shift maximum production is as follows:
  - a. daily production 18,000 sets of plates
  - b. monthly production 360,000 sets of plates
  - c. yearly production 4,320,000 sets of plates

E. Implementation Costs for Phase II

1. Plate Demand

- a. Initials and Replacements 1,200,000 sets of plates
- b. Special and Government 500,000 sets of plates

2. Plate Costs - Additional

- a. Initials and Replacements 1,200,000 @ \$1.09 additional per set (base plate cost of \$1.16 not included) \$1,308,000
- b. Special and Government 500,000 @ \$2.25 per set \$1,125,000
- \$2,433,000

3. Personnel

a. Implementation Personnel - Phase II

- 4 Senior Data Entry Operators [A10] @ \$15,049 = \$ 60,196
- 2 Principal Data Entry Operators [R14] @ \$18,315 = \$ 36,630
- 1 Supervisor [R21] @ \$25,776 = \$ 25,776
- 1 Coordinator [R27] @ \$34,500 = \$ 34,500
- \$157,102
- plus 5% increase 7,855
- \$164,957
- 2 Mail Clerks [A03] @ \$10,693 = \$ 21,386
- \$186,343

b. Additional Personnel - For Phase III - (3 Months)

- 22 Data Entry Operators [A07] @ \$13,002 = \$ 71,511
- 1 Head Data Entry Operator [R18] @ \$22,263 = \$ 5,566
- 3 Mail Clerks [A03] @ \$10,693 = \$ 8,020
- 2 Senior Mail Clerks [R06] @ \$12,401 = \$ 6,200
- 1 Principal Mail Clerk [R10] @ \$15,071 = \$ 3,768
- \$ 95,065

4. Equipment Costs - For Phase III Personnel

a. Computer Equipment

- 23 CRTs @ \$875 = \$ 20,125
- 23 Printers @ \$565 = \$ 12,995
- \$33,120

b. Computer Equipment Maintenance Costs

- Previously Purchased - 12 months @ \$383/per= \$ 4,596
- New Purchase - 3 months @ \$ 75/per= \$ 225
- \$ 4,821

- c. Misc. Mail Operation Equipment \$ 10,
5. Warehouse and Personnel Work Space
- a. Warehouse  
DMV has sufficient storage space to accommodate plate inventory
- b. Personnel Work Space Leasing Costs  
1,272 sq. ft. @ \$15 per sq. ft./year = \$ 19,
6. Mailing Operation
- a. Envelopes (for special & government plates) - 500,000  
@ .08¢ = \$ 40,
- b. Postage - 500,000 @ .56¢ = \$280,000  
(utilizing bulk rate where possible)
- \$320,  
Total Cost Phase II \$3,101,
- F. Phase III - January 1, 1990 - December 31, 1990
- Phase III includes reflectorized plate issuance for all remaining motor vehicles. Plate replacement for the 5,200,000 annual renewal applicants will be processed via monthly registration cycles. New plate issuance for the annual 1,200,000 new registrations will also occur during this phase. Complete conversion to the new plate is expected by the end of the 12 month period.
- G. Implementation Costs for Phase III
1. Plate Demand
- a. Initials and Replacements 1,200,000 sets of plates
- b. Renewals @ 433,333  
(approx. monthly average) 5,200,000 sets of plates  
Total 6,400,000
2. Plate Cost - Additional
- a. Initials and Replacements - 1,200,000 @ \$1.09  
additional per set = \$ 1,308,000  
(base plate cost of \$1.16 not included)
- b. Renewals - 5,200,000 @ \$2.25  
per set = \$11,700,000  
\$13,008,

### 3. Personnel

#### a. Total Implementation Group - 1 full year

22 Data Entry Operators	@ 13,002 =	\$286,044
4 Senior Data Entry Operators	@ 15,049 =	\$ 60,196
2 Principal Data Entry Operators	@ 18,315 =	\$ 36,630
1 Head Data Entry Operators	@ 22,263 =	\$ 22,263
1 Supervisor	@ 25,776 =	\$ 25,776
1 Coordinator	@ 34,500 =	\$ 34,500
5 Mail Clerks	@ 10,693 =	\$ 53,465
2 Senior Mail Clerks	@ 12,401 =	\$ 24,802
1 Principal Mail Clerk	@ 15,071 =	\$ 15,071
39 Personnel		<u>\$558,747</u>
	plus 5% increase	<u>27,937</u>
		<u>\$586,694</u>

Personnel phase out would occur during Phase III and would be accomplished through attrition and reallocation to DMV existing vacant positions

Phase-out estimate - less 25% (146,671)

\$440,023

### 4. Mailing Operation

Mailing costs based upon Central Office workload of 50% of 5,200,000 annual renewals

a. Envelopes - 2,600,000 @ .08¢ = \$ 208,000  
(represents 50% of workload - 50% will obtain registration renewal and new plates at local agencies)

b. Postage - 2,600,000 @ .56¢ per set = \$1,456,000  
(bulk rates used where possible)

\$1,664,000

### 5. Computer Equipment Maintenance Costs

a. 12 months @ \$45 per month

\$ 5,490

### 6. Increased Plate Delivery Costs

(Based upon current vendor contract) (additional plates delivered to local agencies 2.6 million sets)

\$ 168,000

Total Cost Phase III

\$15,285,509

### H. Total Additional Cost of Reflectorized Plate Program

1. Phase I \$ 337,430

2. Phase II \$ 3,101,429

3. Phase III \$15,285,509

Grand Total General Issue/Recall \$18,724,368

### Special Plates

At the present time, New Jersey DMV issues 70 different types of vehicle registration plates. These plates are issued to individuals as well as to state, county and local government officials, New Jersey's representatives and Senators. They are available as courtesy plates, personalized plates, special organization plates, handicapped, no fee, historic, amateur radio, school vehicle, dealer (2 kinds), vehicle converter, street rod, temporary (6 kinds), motorcycle (2 kinds), farmer (2 kinds), tractor, moped, trailer, omnibus, PUC limo, commuter van, livery, contractor and special event plates. Statutory authority for plate issuance can be found in N.J.S.A. 39:3-27.29, 39:3-27.5, 39:3-27.4, 39:3-27.13, 39:3-27, 39:3-33.4, 39:3-27.24, 39:3-27.8, 39:3-27.27, 39:4-33, 39:4-206.

The following tables depict special plate inventory levels and other related data:

#### Special Organization Plates

<u>Plate</u>	<u>Calendar Yr. Initiated</u>	<u>Inventory as of July 1987</u>	<u>No. Issued Jan/Dec. 1986</u>	<u>Total No. Issued thru June 1987</u>
Medical Dr.	1978	4,710	431	6,235
Chiropractor	1978	140	32	541
Firefighter*	1978	25,710	1,469	29,785
First Aider	1980	440	227	3,773
Military Res.	1984	730	490	956
Natl. Guard	1980	1,300	174	1,798
Street Rod	1982	3,940	24	97
P.O.W.	1982	460	2	293
V.F.W.	1978	6	14	93
N.J. Press	1978	330	13	146
N.Y. Press	1978	600	60	1,379

#### All Other Special Plates Inventory Level as of 1987

PUC Limo*	2,050	Contractor Equipment	8,550
Moped	7,900	Municipal Govt.	29,160
Handicapped	2,140	County Govt.	18,690
Disabled Vet	1,080	State Govt.	1,620
In transit Empty	1,470	Historic	990
N.J. Transit	990	No Fee	90

There are no inventory levels maintained for "courtesy" or "Personalized" plates as they are manufactured on a demand basis.

\*Number of black on straw plates presently in warehouse storage.

22X

In the interests of clarity and expediency, division of special plates, by category is necessary. The following groupings should be used for analytical purposes:

1. Special Organization Plates - plates issued to members of organizations or individuals who are members of certain professions such as the VFW or Podiatrist. Plates included in this category are: Medical Doctor, Dentist, Chiropractor, Podiatrist, Fire Fighter, First Aider, NJP, (New Jersey Press) NYP, (New York Press) Congressional Medal of Honor, VFW, Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force and Marine Reserves and Prisoner of War.
2. Courtesy Plates and Personalized Plates - plates designed and requested by a customer or low number plates issued to select individuals.
3. Government Plates - plates issued to individuals in Federal, State, County and Local Government. Plates included in this category are: Governor, US Senate, US Congress, Cabinet, Senate, Assembly, State Government, County Government, Municipal Government, Department of Transportation, County Officer, County Official, State Police, and Turnpike. Also, Surrogate, Sheriff, etc.
4. Commercial Plates - these are plates issued to commercial vehicles and include: NJ transit, School Vehicle 1, School Vehicle 2, New Car Dealer, Used Car Dealer, Vehicle Converter, Non-conventional dealer, dealer motorcycle, commercial, omnibus, PUC (Public Utilities Commission), Limo, Commuter Van, Livery and Contractor Equipment.
5. Temporary Plates - plates that are issued for a specified length of time or purpose. Included in this category are: Temporary (DTF), Temporary (R-L) Temporary Vehicle Manufacture, Temporary (DTT), 20-day Temporary and Temporary non-resident.
6. Farm Vehicles - plates issued for vehicles specifically used in farming, including Farmer, Farm Use and Tractor.
7. Unique Vehicles - plates issued to vehicles of unique value, design or purpose including: Historic, Amateur Radio, Street Rod, Regular Motorcycle, Moped, Trailer and Special Events.
8. Disabled Motorist Plates - plates that are issued to individuals with a physical disability, such as Handicapped, Disabled Vet (DV), Disabled American Veteran (DAV).
9. No Fee Plates or Non-Profit Organizations Plates - plates assigned to vehicles owned by non-profit organization.

SENATOR GRAVES  
MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

MY NAME IS FRED GUARNIERI, I AM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH JERSEY PACKAGE STORES ASSOCIATION ,ONE OF THE LARGEST CHAPTERS IN THE STATE ASSOCIATION. I HAVE SERVED FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS AS THE STATE PRESIDENT. I HAVE BEEN A RETAILER FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS AND CONSIDER MYSELF AS LUCKY AS ANY OF OUR "LOTTO" JACKPOT WINNERS. WHY, YOU MIGHT ASK ? BECAUSE IN THOSE TWENTY YEARS I HAVE AVOIDED SERVING AN UNDERAGE PURCHASER OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OR MORE ACCURATELY I HAVE NOT BEEN CAUGHT. MIND YOU I HAVE BEEN AS VIGILANT AS I CAN HUMANLY BE TO AVOID THE SERVICE TO UNDERAGE PURCHASER'S BUT I WOULD BE TOTALLY NAIVE TO BELIEVE THAT SOME HAVE NOT SLIPPED PAST MY SCRUTINY.

I AM HERE TO SUPPORT YOUR BILLS MAKING IT TOUGHER ON THOSE PERPETRATORS WHO LAUGH AT RETAILERS AND TAVERN OWNERS, WHILE THEY SLIP PAST INSPECTION OF THEIR DOCUMENTS PROVING THEM TO BE LEGALLY ABLE TO OBTAIN OR CONSUME ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES. FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE I CAN RELATE THE MANY " SCAMS " THEY USE TO EFFECT SERVICE. AMONGST THEM , FOREMOST, ARE PHONY I.D.'S PROBABLY THE STRONGEST ARGUMENT FOR A FOOL PROOF IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM WHICH WOULD NOT ONLY AID OUR INDUSTRY BUT SERVE THE BANKING , MOTOR VEHICLE, HEALTH AND WELFARE AND IM SURE MANY OTHERS IN THE STATE.



I HAVE BROUGHT WITH ME TWO DOCUMENTS TO IMPRESS UPON YOU THAT THIS IS NOT A "JOHNNIE COME LATELY " PROGRAM WITH OUR ORGANIZATION. THE FIRST DATES BACK TO ~~1978~~<sup>1973</sup> WHEN WE AS AN ORGANIZATION OPPOSED THE LOWERING OF THE DRINKING AGE TO 18. WE KNEW THAT THOSE ENTERPRISING YOUNGSTERS 19 AND 20 WHO WERE OBTAINING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND THOSE 21 YEAR OLDER'S GETTING IT FOR THEIR YOUNGER FRIENDS WERE A PROBLEM BUT NO WHERE NEARLY AS DISASTROUS AS 18 YEAR OLDER'S GETTING IT FOR THEIR 16 AND 17 YEAR OLD FRIENDS. IT IS A MATTER OF RECORD THAT WE JOINED THE COALITION FOR 21 TO RAISE THE DRINKING AGE BACK. I WOULD ALSO SUBMIT A LETTER I DISTRIBUTED MY FIRST YEAR AS PRESIDENT OF NJLSA, CLEARLY PRESENTING OUR ORGANIZATION POSITION ON UNDERAGE PURCHASER'S. ARMED WITH LAWS THAT PUT A BIG BITE ON THOSE WHO WOULD ATTEMPT TO FOOL RETAILERS MANY OF US USED THAT LAW VERY EFFECTIVELY. I WOULD ADD THAT IT WAS AT A FINANCIAL RISK; FOR TO ENFORCE THIS PROVISION MEANT THAT THE IMMEDIATE FAMILY WAS INCENSED THAT THEIR LITTLE TWENTY YEAR GIRL OR BOY WOULD BE TREATED SO HARSHLY. I HAVE PERSONALLY ONLY RESORTED TO THIS PROVISION ON THREE OCCASION. THIS HAS EARNED ME A REPUTATION OF BEING THE NASTIEST RETAILER IN TOWN, A REPUTATION I WORK HARD FOR. THE REST OF THE TIME I HAVE FOUND THE PARENTS TO BE EXTREMELY CO-OPERATIVE WITH THE LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENTS IN " STATION HOUSE ADJUSTMENTS "

YOUR PROPOSED LAW , I FEEL, WOULD PROVIDE THE PROPER DETERRENT TO THOSE ENTERPRISING YOUNG-STERS, WHO WILL ALWAYS FIND A WAY TO CIRCUMVENT THE " ESTABLISHMENT ". THE PROPOSED PENALTIES JUDICIALLY APPLIED WILL TELL OUR UNDERAGE CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS THAT NEW JERSEY IS SERIOUS IN IT'S LEGISLATIVE CONFIRMATION OF MODERATION AS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR LIQUOR LAWS.

THANK YOU AND I'M AVAILABLE FOR ANY QUESTIONS.

Fred R. Guarnieri, Jr., Pres.  
R.R. 1, Box 663, Delsea Drive  
Westville, NJ 08093  
(609) 456-9595  
David Dwork  
Executive Vice President  
Arthur Mengucci  
1st Vice President  
Frank LaSpada  
Treasurer  
John J. Hanley  
Sergeant at Arms



**NEW JERSEY LIQUOR STORES ASSOCIATION**  
*Affiliated with National Liquor Stores Association*  
Post Office Box 2080 • 156 W. State Street • Trenton, NJ 08607  
(609) 393-1498

Leo L. Bromley  
Executive Director  
Julius R. Pollatschek  
General Counsel  
Thomas E. Leach  
Legislative Counsel  
Meyer Trachtenberg  
State Chaplain  
David W. Shoemaker  
Executive Secretary

**AN OPEN LETTER ON UNDERAGE PURCHASES OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

**To :** New Jersey School Administrators; N.J. School Boards; Students; N.J. Education Association; Mothers Against Drunk Driving; Coalition for 21; Member Retailers

**From:** Fred R. Guarnieri, Jr., N.J.L.S.A.; for its members.

**Ref. :** NJSA 33:1-81

I am an owner-operator of a package store licensed in New Jersey to sell alcoholic beverages at retail for off-premise consumption. I am also president of the N. J. Liquor Stores Association. Store owners throughout the State are extremely concerned with the growing numbers of underage persons attempting to buy alcoholic beverages from our stores. We do not want their business until they are of legal age. It is illegal for us to serve them. And it is illegal for them to enter our stores to attempt to purchase alcoholic beverages, or to have someone else purchase such beverages for them.

I have written in local newspapers that, "Many teenagers regard attempting to buy liquor in a store as a game. They have the attitude that, if caught without proper identification it's just 'tough luck' and I can try again in another store".

New Jersey Statutes (NJSA 33:1-81) provide for the arrest, prosecution and punishment for attempts of underaged persons to purchase alcoholic beverages; or for entering the premises of a tavern or liquor store with the intent to purchase beer, wine or liquor; or for a misstatement of age in trying to make a purchase; or for having someone else purchase for him or her.

**Violation Can Result In :**

1. Payment of a fine of not less than \$100 - nor more than \$1000;
2. Possible imprisonment up to 6 months;
3. Mandatory loss or deferment of driver's license privileges for 6 months;
4. A requirement to participate in a alcohol education or treatment program for a period not to exceed 6 months.

There are other New Jersey and Federal laws that provide serious penalties for transferring identification cards for another persons use; tampering with drivers' licenses; perjury; and making false statements on applications.

Needless to say, a criminal record can seriously impact an adolescent's future, entrance into college or a military academy, and personal reputation.

The serving of an underage person by a tavern or liquor store clerk can also have very grave consequences for the retailer, including fines, suspension or even loss of license.

It is our hope that the seriousness of the illegal purchase "game" will be publicized to students, Student Councils, athletic teams and their coaches, the driver's education program, SADD, and wherever else appropriate.

We also want it to be known that liquor store retailers intend to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law in an effort to control this illegal activity.

Our Association's credo is "For Strict Control and Moderation". As responsible business people in our own communities we pledge to uphold our commitment for strict control and moderation for the good of all concerned.

Sincerely,

Fred R. Guarnieri, Jr.  
President

CC: W. Cary Edwards, Attorney General, State of N. J.  
Col. Clinton Pagano, Supt. of N. J. State Police

*"For Strict Control and Moderation"*

Send  
2  
Dir. of MVC  
S. J. Quinlan  
Col. Pagan  
J. J. Jaffer

7 Ahern Way  
W. Orange, NJ  
07052-2101

April 29th, 1987

The Hon. Frank Graves, Mayor  
City of Paterson  
Paterson City Hall  
Paterson, NJ 07505

Dear Mr Graves,

I am writing you this letter in your capacity as chairman of the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee which you chair in Trenton. I read with interest an article in Monday's Star-Ledger that dealt with the proposal for new license plates for the state of New Jersey. As a license plate collector with a good deal of knowledge on the current plates, I would like to share my views on the matter. I am in favor of reflectorized plates, and have been inquiring as to when they might become available. I hope that the time has come, and this is for a couple of reasons.

To begin with, as you noted in the article, law enforcement officials have been pressing for the new tags as a visible marker on a vehicle at night, and as well as in poor weather conditions that require the use of headlights. Vehicle identification is the primary purpose of such plates as noted by State Police Superintendent Clinton Pagano. New Jersey will be the only jurisdiction in North America without such plates when Kentucky issues their first reflective plates early next year. Hence, uniformity is also a factor, especially when out of state law agencies are involved.

Second, and while it may not be as important, it is important none the less. There are currently three colors of plates on the roads. Buff and Blue, Black on Straw and the experimental reflective black on straw, issued on plates from WIA-100 to SZZ-999. The state discontinued them after that point, because they felt the surface did not meet durability standards. (Back then, the plates were made of steel, and not the lightweight aluminum as is the present case)

Along this line, there are also three different combinations of passenger plates in use (ABC-123, 123-ABC, and ABC-12A), plus about eight different commercial plate formats. Needless to say, it may

32x

(2)  
result in confusion when the average citizen (e.g.) witnesses an accident and may give an incorrect plate number. I therefore would propose the following:

A: A General issue. By this, I mean that the state would do what it did back in 1959/60 when the straw bases were introduced. The State allotted a certain number of plates to dealer-issues and new registrants. They also allotted the remainder to be used to replace the old orange and black 1952 and 57 issues. This was done by using the last name of the registered owner of the vehicle, i.e. e.g. My last name begins with a "B", so we were issued a plate in the A series, while someone with the name beginning with "W" was issued "E" series tags. The last general issue allotted plates from ARG-100 to EYZ-999 to these replacement issued tags. It may be a lot more paperwork than it was back in 1959, but I feel that today's technology could handle it. Within a few years, all vehicles would have the same plates on their cars.

B: Cost. I have submitted a proposal to Governor Kean in a letter in which the cost should be a one time fee, and that is when the plates are issued. At present, a set of plates is about \$3.00, a modest fee for permanent plates. An extra \$1.75 to \$2.00 is about the maximum the fee should be raised. New York is currently re-plating for less than \$12 million, so I find the estimate of \$20 million to be somewhat excessive.

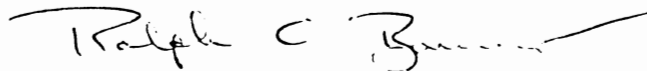
C: Format. The police are asking for larger numerals and letters on the plates, which I think is unnecessary. To do so would mean that we would only have five usable spaces on the plate, thus seriously reducing the number of available combinations. I propose a movement in the other direction, and that is a seven digit plate, similar to California and the old NY bases. The current ABC-12A format, while on several types of vehicles in NJ, are confusing to out of state officials. Besides, most people are used to seeing the numbers and letters separated. A new six digit format cannot be introduced because of the previous formats listed earlier in this letter. Hence, a seven digit plate with an "A123-ABC" format allows for an almost endless number of combinations, as well as vanity plates. This means the state would have to manufacture new dies for the embossing machines, but I feel that this would

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be a good investment in the future.

Most states re-plate every five or ten years, thus allowing for the reuse of combinations, while replacing old, unreadable plates. I Note the fact that New Jersey is the ONLY jurisdiction in the United States (aside from Delaware, but that's a different situation) that has had the same plates on the road for almost 30 years. Let's face it, some of these are due to be replaced. I suggest legislation that would make all new and used car purchasers that purchase vehicles from dealers purchase a new set of plates thereby removing the black and straw plates from the roads and thus freeing up at least the ABC-123 format for later use. The 123-ABC format is different, as the plates were changed with 100-LAA.

Well, that's my view. I hope that you consider it when your committee convenes on this matter in the future. I should like to be able to attend the upcoming hearings, when they are scheduled. I would like to know how to find out when (in advance) these hearings take place, as well as their location. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and I hope that you can use any of the information I have given you.

Sincerely,



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