



Testimony on S.127 miscellaneous changes to laws related to vehicles and vessels  
*Number of license plates*  
*House Transportation Committee*  
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### **VRGA Overview**

VRGA is the result of the Vermont Retail Association and the Vermont Grocers Association merging in 2014. To date, VRGA consists of about 800 members – ranging from general retail, grocery stores, convenience stores, distributors, producers, and business service members. We are the umbrella association for the Vermont Specialty Food Association, the Vermont Petroleum Association, and the Vermont Alliance of Country Stores. We host several networking events throughout the year to foster networking, and information sharing. We work hard to represent the voice of our collective membership, ensure that they're well-informed to the point where they are in compliance with state laws and regulations, and are aware of cutting edge resources and opportunities in the retail sector.

### **Concerns on reducing the number of license plates**

The main concern retailers have with regards to the elimination of a second license plate is safety. There are many situations in which the front license plate on a vehicle is the only plate visible to employees in retail locations or on video surveillance footage.

Gas stations or convenience stores, grocery stores, and larger stores are rather accessible establishments and are quite often the targets of theft and drive-offs; gas stations and convenience stores, especially. The safety of our employees, the public, and the facilities are a top priority for business owners.

A majority of the thefts in the United States involve a motor vehicle, and the usage of two license plates increases the opportunity of catching perpetrators faster. While stores have made significant investments in surveillance equipment, which are strategically placed in various locations within and outside of a store, there is an increased chance that vehicles displaying only one license plate diminishes the ability to identify the perpetrator.

Asset prevention professionals have worked to increase communication among each other, as well as law enforcement professionals. Many of these communications include photos of a vehicle with the front or back license plate. These communications

More increasingly, law enforcement officials are contacting convenience stores to obtain access to their surveillance footage to help identify a car that may have been identified as they flee a store after a theft.

With an increase in retail theft, or organized retail crime in Vermont, retailers have concern that eliminating the requirement that vehicles display a front and rear license plate will hinder their efforts in reducing theft or organized retail crime.