

1 H.855

2 Introduced by Representative Chase of Colchester

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Motor vehicles; number plates; license plates

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to eliminate the
7 requirement that a motor vehicle display a front plate on certain vehicles.

8 An act relating to the display of the front vehicle number plate

9 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

10 Sec. 1. 23 V.S.A. § 511 is amended to read:

11 § 511. ISSUANCE OF NUMBER PLATES AND MANNER OF DISPLAY

12 (a) Issuance of number plates.

13 ~~(1) A motor vehicle operated on any highway shall have displayed in a~~
14 ~~conspicuous place either one or two number plates as the~~ Upon initial
15 registration of a motor vehicle, the Commissioner ~~may require~~ shall furnish
16 one number plate, except that he or she shall furnish two number plates:

17 (A) for motor trucks with a registered weight of 10,100 pounds or
18 more; and

19 (B) when vanity or specialty plates are issued for an additional fee
20 pursuant to subsection 304(b) and sections 304b and 304c of this title.

1 (2) Registrants may obtain additional plates of the same design and
2 assigned number upon payment of the fee prescribed in subsection 514(b) of
3 this title.

4 (b) Display of number plates. ~~Such number plates shall be furnished by the~~
5 Commissioner and Number plates shall show the number assigned to such the
6 vehicle by the Commissioner and shall be conspicuously displayed as
7 prescribed by the Commissioner, but in no event shall the Commissioner
8 require that two number plates be displayed on any vehicle other than a motor
9 truck with a registered weight of 10,100 pounds or more.

10 (1) If only one number plate is furnished, the same displayed, it shall be
11 securely attached to the rear of the vehicle. If two number plates are furnished
12 displayed, one shall be securely attached to the rear and one to the front of the
13 vehicle.

14 (2) If a vehicle is only required to display one number plate, the
15 registrant may display on the front of the vehicle commemorative plates issued
16 under the former sections 515a, 515b, and 515c of this title; Vermont Strong
17 Plates; or any other plate the display of which is consistent with law. Nothing
18 in this section shall be construed to authorize the display of plates in violation
19 of section 513 of this title.

20 (3) The number plates shall be kept entirely unobscured, and the
21 numerals and the letters thereon shall be plainly legible at all times. They shall

1 be kept horizontal, shall be so fastened as not to swing, ~~excepting however,~~
2 except that there may be installed on a motor truck or truck tractor a device
3 ~~which~~ that would, upon contact with a substantial object, permit the rear
4 number plate to swing toward the front of the vehicle, provided such device
5 automatically returns the number plate to its original rigid position after
6 contact is released, and the ground clearance of the lower edges thereof shall
7 be established by the Commissioner pursuant to the provisions of 3 V.S.A.
8 chapter 25.

9 ~~(b)~~(c) Display of validation sticker. A registration validation sticker shall
10 be unobstructed, and shall be affixed as follows:

11 * * *

12 ~~(e)~~(d) Operation. A person shall not operate a motor vehicle unless a
13 number plate or plates and a validation sticker are displayed as provided in this
14 section.

15 ~~(d)~~(e) Enforcement. An operator cited for violating subsection ~~(e)~~(d) of
16 this section with respect to failure to display a validation sticker on a pleasure
17 car, motorcycle, or truck that could be registered for less than 26,001 pounds
18 shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$5.00, which penalty shall
19 be exempt from surcharges under 13 V.S.A. § 7282(a), if he or she is cited
20 within the 14 days following the expiration of the motor vehicle's registration.

1 Sec. 2. 23 V.S.A. § 513 is amended to read:

2 § 513. MISUSE OF PLATES

3 (a) Except as provided in section 321 of this title, an owner of a motor
4 vehicle shall not attach or cause to be attached to the vehicle a number plate or
5 plates that were not assigned by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles. A
6 person shall not operate a motor vehicle, except as provided in section 321 of
7 this title, to which a number plate or plates are attached that were not assigned
8 to the vehicle by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles. An inspector of motor
9 vehicles and any enforcement officer shall have authority to remove from a
10 motor vehicle any plates ~~which have been~~ attached in violation of the
11 provisions of this section.

12 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, an owner of a vehicle
13 that is not required to display two number plates pursuant to section 511 of this
14 title may display a registration plate for any jurisdiction outside North America
15 on the front of the vehicle unless the Commissioner determines and makes
16 public on the Department of Motor Vehicle's website that the registration plate
17 could be confused with a number plate from a jurisdiction within North
18 America.

19 Sec. 3. 23 V.S.A. § 514 is amended to read:

20 § 514. REPLACEMENT OR ADDITIONAL NUMBER PLATES

1 (a) In case of the loss of a number plate, the owner of the motor vehicle to
2 which it was assigned shall ~~forthwith~~ immediately notify the Commissioner of
3 Motor Vehicles of such loss, ~~and he or she shall furnish such owner with a new~~
4 ~~plate. The fees charged shall be \$12.00 for each plate.~~ The owner of a motor
5 ~~vehicle~~ truck with a registered weight of 10,100 pounds or more who has lost
6 one number plate may operate his or her vehicle with one number plate
7 attached ~~thereto~~ to the rear of the vehicle, until a new plate is furnished ~~him or~~
8 ~~her~~, provided he or she ~~has~~ notified the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles as
9 required in this ~~section~~ subsection.

10 (b) Any replacement or additional number plate shall be issued at a fee of
11 \$12.00. However, if the Commissioner, in his or her discretion, determines
12 that a plate has become illegible as a result of deficiencies in the manufacturing
13 process or by use of faulty materials, the ~~replacement~~ fee shall be waived.

14 Sec. 4. STATUTORY REVISION AUTHORITY

15 When preparing the Vermont Statutes Annotated for publication, the Office
16 of Legislative Council shall make the following revisions throughout the
17 statutes as needed for consistency with Secs. 1–3 of this act, as long as the
18 revisions have no other effect on the meaning of the affected statutes:

19 (1) replace “number plates” with “a number plate or plates” in Title 23;
20 and

1 (2) revisions that are substantially similar to those described in
2 subdivision (1) of this section.

3 Sec. 5. RULEMAKING

4 The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles may adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A.
5 chapter 25 to facilitate the return of registration plates that no longer need to be
6 displayed.

7 Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATES

8 (a) This section and Sec. 5 (rulemaking) shall take effect on passage.

9 (b) All other sections shall take effect on July 1, 2020.