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Prince George's County

MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Education, Business and
Administration Subcommittee

Pensions Subcommittee

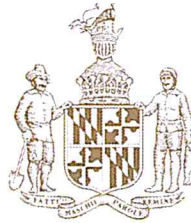
Joint Committees

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Fair Practices and
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson
SB 410: Vehicle Laws – Unauthorized Registration Plates Prohibition

Good afternoon, Chairman Smith and my fellow esteemed members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee. Today, I wish to address you on the vehicle registration plate prohibition before us now as: Senate Bill 410. This prohibition "...[any] person [from displaying any vehicle] registration plate that is neither: one, lawfully issued; or, two, legally used on or for the vehicle under [its] title. [Further, no one may] knowingly display [...] or use, possess, or purchase for any vehicle any registration plate [that isn't legally attached to the vehicle. Therefore, any person convicted in violation of this statute is subject to up to 90 days imprisonment, *and/or* a fine of \$10,000]."

Purposefully, this bill deters the knowledgeable display, use, possession, or purchase of unauthorized registration plates for any vehicle. Beyond the plain sense of this measure is its potential pecuniary benefit.

A previous fiscal note provided by the Department of Legislative Services of directly related legislation, but from a prior year, provides that just in proper enforcement of merely maintaining the display of front and rear tags, Maryland stands to benefit at least \$1 million per year.

Even without the financial benefit, common sense prevails. While it is unconstitutional to say that one has the propensity to commit a crime because of certain behaviors, we can draw strong correlations. One which is plain to me here today is that those likely to engage in behaviors whereby they find themselves knowledgeably possessing, using, or displaying illegal plates on or for a vehicle are likely up to no good. Thus, it is not only in our interest, but in fact, our responsibility to support and motivate the enactment of this seemingly small piece of legislation.

Let us, and this committee give it the weight it deserves with a truly resolved report in favor of Senate Bill 410: *Vehicle Laws – Unauthorized Registration Plates Prohibition*. It may be 2024, but like 100 years before, in this committee a member claims, but with good reason: prohibition, prohibition, prohibition!

Thus, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 410.