
February 24, 2022

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chairman, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

***Re: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 670 – Vehicle Laws – Registration Renewal –
Inspection Requirement***

Dear Chairman Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 670 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 670 requires receipt of a valid registration renewal inspection certificate by the MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to authorize a vehicle's registration renewal for any vehicle older than five model years (excluding Class L and N Historic registrations). The required inspection only includes the brakes, steering column, horn, mirrors, lights, windows, windshield, windshield wipers, speedometer, and seat belts – which is only a portion of the current safety inspection.

Currently, Maryland requires a safety inspection when a used vehicle is titled in Maryland for the first time or when a used vehicle changes ownership, unless the transfer qualifies as a gift. Annually, there are 2,046,510 vehicle registration renewals, which is over 170,000 registration renewals per month. More than one-third of those renewals are completed within two weeks of the vehicle's registration expiring and 97 percent of renewals are completed through alternative methods. The additional inspection required by Senate Bill 670 could cause a delay in the renewal process, preventing customers from being able to complete their registration renewal outside a branch office, and raises concerns that there will be a significant increase in vehicles operating on Maryland's roadways with expired registrations.

When reviewing Maryland crash data from 2016 to 2020, a total of 211,389 vehicle-related crashes were reported. Only 1.1 percent, or 2,415 vehicle-related crashes, listed a mechanical defect as a contributing factor.

Additionally, the MDOT MVA offers the option of a one-year or two-year vehicle registration. Many customers who opt for a one-year registration do so as a result of financial concerns; Senate Bill 670 may pose an additional financial burden, due to the cost associated with additional inspections.

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The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 670.

Respectfully submitted,

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