



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Section
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: March 5, 2026

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 1495 **POSITION:** Oppose

BILL TITLE: Vehicle Laws – Registration Plate

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS:

This legislation requires the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to issue only one registration plate for all classes of vehicles, eliminating the current two-plate system for most passenger vehicles. It also adds enforcement provisions for historic (Class L) vehicle plates and updates placement and display rules statewide

Under current law, the Motor Vehicle Administration is required to issue two registration plates, and the vehicle must display both unless it is in one of three vehicle classes: Class D (motorcycle), Class F (tractor), or Class G (trailer).

From a public safety perspective, the additional front plate is a pivotal component for investigators, enabling officers and civilian witnesses across the state to easily identify and report vehicles suspected of involvement in criminal activities, missing-person cases, hit-and-run collisions, or other motor vehicle-related investigations. The fact that Maryland Law requires front and rear plates provides officers and civilian witnesses with a few additional seconds to view the plate as the vehicle approaches, as well as another angle from the rear of the vehicle as it pulls away. This time period, with a view of the front plate, is a key law enforcement tool, as vehicles may be traveling at high speeds on controlled-access highways, and the window of opportunity to view the plate from the rear is minimal. This could be a key component of an investigation that leads to the successful apprehension of a criminal or to the location of a missing or endangered person, as broadcast during an Amber, Silver, or Blue Alert.

Maryland Law Enforcement also utilizes the License Plate Readers (LPR) Program, which includes units at fixed locations and in mobile deployments. The removal of the front license plate requirement will reduce the number of Maryland-registered vehicles that need to be scanned. This could lead to Maryland Law Enforcement missing a suspect or a victim's vehicle in a key investigation. LPR Program statistics indicate that 30-40% of all tags scanned in mobile applications are on front registration plates.

For these reasons, the Maryland State Police urges the Committee to give House Bill 1495 an unfavorable report.