



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Samira Jackson, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: March 5, 2026

RE: **HB 1495 - Motor Vehicle Laws - Registration Plates - Single Registration Plate**

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **OPPOSE HB 1495**. This bill would institute a one-registration plate requirement, repealing the requirement to display both a front and rear registration plate for most vehicle classes. The registration plate must be attached on the front of tractors and on the rear of all other vehicles.

The availability of two plates on vehicles in Maryland has been of great assistance to law enforcement in carrying out their responsibilities. Increasingly, law enforcement is relying on technology to assist us in identifying vehicles that are stolen, have expired tags, or could have been involved in a criminal act. These machines can be used when an officer passes a moving vehicle from either direction. That would not be possible with a single registration plate.

Further, the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) has confirmed through a December 2025 feasibility report that maintaining two license plates is critical not only for law enforcement purposes, but also for the State's ability to effectively identify vehicles through automated systems. MDTA explained that its all-electronic tolling operations rely on capturing images of both the front and rear plates because rear plates are frequently missing, obscured, altered, or blocked by lawful obstructions such as bike racks. In calendar year 2024 alone, MDTA used the front plate to successfully identify and invoice vehicle owners approximately 43% of the time, and reported that eliminating the front plate would have resulted in an estimated loss of approximately \$35 million in toll revenue for 2-axle vehicles. MDTA further warned that removing the option of a front plate would worsen deliberate plate obstruction practices and severely hamper enforcement and accountability efforts. These findings reinforce that a two-plate system remains an essential public safety and compliance tool across Maryland.

A 2-plate registration system also makes it easier to scan parked vehicles. If only one plate is required, vehicle operators could park a car with one plate not visible, making it extremely difficult for an officer to electronically scan the plate. An officer would be required to stop his or her vehicle, exit the car and physically walk behind each automobile to check it. Such a requirement is inefficient, costly, and in some instances could be a safety issue for the officer.

532 Baltimore Boulevard, Suite 308
Westminster, Maryland 21157
667-314-3216 / 667-314-3236

In closing, two registration plates are a valuable and important tool for Maryland's law enforcement community. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **OPPOSE HB 1495** and urge an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report.