

2026 MD HB 773 SEMA Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Christian Robinson

Position: FAV



February 27, 2026

Maryland House of Delegates
Environment and Transportation Committee
Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SEMA Support for HB 773

Chair of the Board

* Melanie White

Chair-Elect

* Norris Marshall

**Immediate Past Chairman
& Secretary**

* Kyle Fickler

Treasurer

* Chris Douglas

Board of Directors

Bill Bader
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Ted Wentz III

CEO

Mike Spagnola

General Counsel

David P. Goch

* Executive Committee

Dear Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA), I am writing in support of House Bill (HB) 773, which would restore a rolling eligibility date for historic vehicle registration in Maryland.

SEMA represents more than 7,000 member companies nationwide, including 67 businesses in Maryland. Approximately 95 percent of these companies are small businesses employing fewer than 100 people. Our members design, manufacture, distribute, and sell specialty automotive parts and accessories, supporting thousands of jobs in Maryland and across the country.

In 2025, the General Assembly changed Maryland's historic vehicle law by replacing the long-standing rolling eligibility date with a fixed cutoff of model year 1999. While we understand the desire to address misuse of historic vehicle registration, a static cutoff effectively declares that no vehicle produced after 1999 can ever qualify as a collector or historic vehicle. Over time, this approach becomes increasingly disconnected from how collector vehicles are defined and treated in most states and within the enthusiast community.

Collector vehicles are defined by age, condition, limited use, and cultural significance. A rolling eligibility date recognizes that vehicles age into that status over time, while a fixed date permanently excludes entire generations of vehicles regardless of how carefully they are maintained or how infrequently they are driven. HB 773 restores a reasonable, time-tested framework that better reflects the reality of the collector vehicle market.

SEMA agrees that abuse of historic vehicle registration should be addressed. Vehicles used for daily transportation or that do not meet the intent of historic registration undermine public confidence in the program. Reining in that abuse is appropriate. However, permanently freezing eligibility at 1999 is an overly blunt solution that penalizes legitimate collectors and small businesses without directly targeting misuse.

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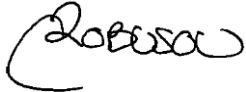
E-mail: sema@sema.org
Website: www.sema.org

Maryland's specialty automotive aftermarket industry is an important part of the state's economy. It generates \$3.24 billion in economic impact, supports 14,946 jobs, provides \$1.19 billion in wages and benefits, and contributes \$530.24 million in state and local taxes. Policies that recognize and support legitimate collector vehicles help sustain this economic activity, including restoration shops, specialty parts manufacturers, and small retailers across the state.

For these reasons, SEMA respectfully urges the Committee to give HB 773 a favorable report. The bill strikes a better balance by preserving the integrity of historic vehicle registration while ensuring that Maryland's laws continue to reflect the evolving nature of the collector vehicle hobby and the small businesses that support it.

Thank you for your consideration, and we appreciate the opportunity to serve as a resource to the Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robinson", with a large, stylized initial "C" on the left side.

Christian Robinson
Senior Director, State Government Affairs
Specialty Equipment Market Association

House Bill 773 Letter.pdf

Uploaded by: Kyle Blake

Position: FWA

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Maryland House of Delegates
Environmental & Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

Good afternoon, Chair Smith and Members of the Committee,
My name is Kyle Blake. I am a resident of Cumberland, Maryland, and I appear before you today as a National Director of the Antique Automobile Club of America (AACA) to ask for your support on **House Bill 773**.

To understand why this bill matters, it is important to understand who the AACA is. We are the world's oldest and largest organization dedicated to automotive preservation and restoration. We are 45,000 members strong, including **2,000 active members in 8 regions right here in Maryland**.

For 91 years, we have been the standard-bearers for this hobby. And since 1973, we have operated on a specific core standard: **a vehicle becomes eligible as historic when it reaches 25 years of age**.

This "25-year rule" is the global gold standard set by AACA. House Bill 773 simply asks Maryland to adopt that same standard.

Right now, Maryland law cuts off historic vehicles at the year 1999. However, at our national meets last year, we displayed thousands of pristine vehicles from the year 2000 and later- with approximately 25 being from the year 2000 alone. These vehicles are restored to the way in which they were delivered from the dealer to the original owner- no modifications and with all the factory safety specifications of the time. Under current regulations, those cars are celebrated globally as historic, yet they are unrecognized here at home.

But this isn't just about dates on a calendar; it is about **people**. The antique car hobby is driven by nostalgia. People collect the cars they coveted in their childhood. By freezing the definition of "historic" at 1999, we are inadvertently closing the door on a new generation of enthusiasts. We are telling young collectors that the cars *they* grew up with don't count.

To keep this hobby alive and growing, we must welcome the vehicles of the new millennium and the younger members who love them.

House Bill 773 aligns Maryland with industry standards and ensures our hobby has a future. On behalf of the AACA and our 2,000 Maryland members, I urge a favorable report.

Thank you for your time, and the AACA wishes you happy motoring.



Kyle Blake,
National Director/ Vice President of Youth Development & National Awards
Antique Automobile Club of America

Historic Vehicle Bills HB4 & 125.pdf

Uploaded by: Mark Hauf

Position: UNF

Mark Hauf
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Thank you, chairman Wilkens and members of the committee, for allowing me to testify today on behalf of myself and that of several classic car groups.

My name is Mark Hauf. I'm retired, live in White Marsh and I'm an avid car enthusiast. My prized possession is a pristine, red, 1970 Chevelle Super Sport. Collector cars though, as well as historic vehicles, didn't stop in the 70's or even in 1999. In fact, many are being built in American factories today, and will be the collectors and historic for folks like my son Matthew, in the future.

I'm blessed to own a few classic and historic rides, one **was** my gorgeous, original, one owner, 2003 Chevy Silverado 2500. Deep Garnett Red metallic, absolutely beautiful, just like new. One of my absolute favorites. Just days ago, on January 31st, I was required, under the new historic vehicle law, to have had her safety inspected, re-registered at the MVA and entered into the state's emissions program. As nice as she was; the cost of having her pass these tests, was prohibitive, based on her value and me being retired in today's economy. This past Saturday, I said goodbye to her, as she left for her new home in Pennsylvania, having not only a negative emotional impact on me, but a financial impact on the state of Maryland.

Last week an elderly lady reached out to me on the magazines FB page and said, 'what am I going to do about the truck daddy left me? I don't have the money to pay for repairs and inspections, please help me save my daddy's truck! Folks, that's where you all come in. Please, right this wrong enacted on January 1 and fully support House bills 4 and 125, so that other folks don't have to endure the same loss as me.

Thank you and God bless you!

Membership/affiliations: Save the Hobby
Chasing Muscle Cars
Car Show & Cruise Guide
Jakes Hot Roders
Club 56

HB0773Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Lechlitner

Position: UNF

Michael Lechlitner
941 Druid Hill Ave.
Pasadena, MD 21122

HB0773 Statement:

I thank the committee for considering my testimony concerning HB0773.

I do not support the passage of HB0773 and changing the eligibility requirements of Class L Historic (H-tags), or Class N Street Rod (Street) registration for the following reasons:

- 1) Other pending legislation in this session, specifically HB0004 and HB0125, better address rectifying the ill-advised 2024-2025 legislative changes to H-tag eligibility by the establishment of 25 or more years as meeting requirements for Historic tags.
- 2) A majority of U.S. States who have Historic, Classic, Antique or other designations for specialty vehicle registration use 25 years, not 30 or 40, as the benchmark. This includes all States surrounding Maryland from which the automotive hobby members may purchase from before registering in Maryland. Maryland does not need to be an outlier, with a five-or-more year difference.
- 3) In addition, Federal laws concerning the import of vehicles not originally sold in the U.S., for use in the U.S. also use a 25-year qualification.
- 4) The use of a 30-40 year limitation would disadvantage younger entering participants into the hobby as vehicle prices are tied to their age and rarity, which both increase with the passage of additional years.

In summary, I do not support HB0773 which makes Maryland an outlier on age requirements, needlessly complicates interstate purchases and impedes the hobby. I note this “no” recommendation on HB0773 is supported by the Maryland Collectible Auto Association and the Antique Automobile Club of America, both of whom support a 25-year benchmark for such registration.

I thank the committee for the opportunity to speak on this legislation.

End Statement