

February 19, 2026

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

RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 566 – Vehicle Laws – Historic Motor Vehicles – Minimum Age

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully opposes Senate Bill 566 as it has serious fiscal and operational implications for MDOT and the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA).

SB 566 alters the eligibility requirements for Class L (historic) vehicle registration from the current age requirement of model year 1999 or older to instead be based on a model year age of 25 years or older. It further requires the MVA to reinstate any historic vehicle registration that was suspended or revoked as a result of Chapter 604 of 2025.

The Budget and Reconciliation Act of 2025 updated historic vehicle eligibility from motor vehicles “at least 20 years old” to “a model year of 1999 or earlier.” As a result, vehicles with model years of 2000-2004 no longer qualify for historic plates. As passed into law, there was no provision that allows vehicles with Class L plates to be granted an exemption allowing them to maintain Class L plates. Since taking effect on July 1, 2025, the MVA has required vehicle owners with affected vehicles to return the historic tags when the registration expires and obtain the appropriate new tags for the appropriate registration class.

The MVA notes that it did not revoke or suspend any vehicle with Class L plates that was impacted by Chapter 604 of 2025; as such, there are no registration plates to be reinstated, per the requirements of the bill. Further, from a practical perspective, the MVA would not be able to comply with such a requirement as owners would need to return existing registration tags before new ones could be issued by the Administration.

The General Assembly adopted this change during the 2025 legislative session as part of the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act. DLS estimated at the time that the change would provide additional funding in FY 2027 of \$3.7 million to the Transportation Trust Fund, \$1.5 million to MEMSOF, \$0.6 million to Shock Trauma, and \$0.4 million to the Maryland Trauma Physician Services Funds.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberation of Senate Bill 566.

Respectfully submitted,

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