

# Maryland Automobile Dealers Association

Serving Maryland's New Car and Truck Dealers

## Testimony on House Bill 1166 (As Amended)

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Good afternoon Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee.

My name is Peter Kitzmiller, President of the Maryland Automobile Dealers Association. Our association represents approximately 300 franchised new car and truck dealers and their 20,000 employees across the State of Maryland. I am testifying today in opposition to House Bill 1166, as amended.

While we appreciate the effort to address concerns in the House, the amended bill still does not solve the underlying issue.

There has been no data presented demonstrating that front license plate violations are increasing in Maryland. Without evidence of a growing compliance problem, it is difficult to justify the requirement.

The bill does not improve compliance. Requiring a signed disclosure does not result in a front license plate being installed, and there is no enforcement mechanism tied to the form.

### **A signed form does not put a license plate on a car.**

Dealers have little control over whether a front license plate is ultimately installed. Vehicles leave the dealership on temporary tags, and in many cases permanent plates are mailed directly to the customer. Dealers are being required to document something they cannot control.

The bill shifts enforcement responsibility to dealers by requiring us to collect and submit documentation related to a customer's decision. Enforcement of vehicle equipment laws should remain with law enforcement and the Motor Vehicle Administration.

The House amendment requiring that these signed disclosures be shared with the State Police raises additional concerns. This provision effectively turns dealers into a conduit of information to law enforcement about customers who have not violated the

law. A customer signing a disclosure does not mean they are out of compliance, yet their information is still transmitted.

This injects law enforcement into a retail transaction and places dealers in the position of reporting their own customers, without improving compliance.

The bill remains a paperwork exercise that does not change behavior.

California has a similar disclosure requirement, and it has not resulted in increased compliance with front license plate laws. Enforcement continues to be handled through law enforcement—not dealer paperwork.

For these reasons, we respectfully request an unfavorable report on House Bill 1166.

Thank you, and I would be happy to answer any questions.