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HOUSE BILL 158

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2018

INTRODUCED BY

Patricio Ruiloba

AN ACT

RELATING TO LICENSE PLATES; REQUIRING MOTOR VEHICLES TO DISPLAY
FRONT END LICENSE PLATES; INCREASING LICENSE PLATE FEES;
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 66-3-14 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1978,
Chapter 35, Section 34, as amended) is amended to read:

"66-3-14. REGISTRATION PLATES OR VALIDATING STICKERS TO
BE FURNISHED BY DEPARTMENT--REFLECTIVE MATERIAL.--

A. Except for vehicles registered pursuant to
Section 66-3-27 or 66-3-423 NMSA 1978, the department upon
registering a vehicle shall issue [~~a~~] two registration [~~plate~~]
plates or [~~a~~] two validating [~~sticker~~] stickers to the owner of
the vehicle. The validating [~~sticker~~] stickers may be designed
and required to be placed on the registration [~~plate~~] plates or

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1 elsewhere on the vehicle as prescribed by the department.

2 B. Each registration plate shall have a background
3 of reflective material such that the registration number
4 assigned to the vehicle is plainly legible from a distance of
5 one hundred feet at night. The colors shall include those of
6 the state flag, except prestige and special plates.

7 C. Each registration plate shall have displayed
8 upon it:

9 (1) the registration number assigned to the
10 person to whom it was issued; and

11 (2) the name of this state.

12 D. The department shall issue no registration
13 plates for privately owned vehicles that contain the words
14 "staff officer" or any other title except as otherwise provided
15 by law.

16 E. All registration plates for private vehicles
17 shall be alike in form except for the owner's registration
18 number. The department shall adopt registration number systems
19 for registration plates.

20 F. In lieu of or in addition to a registration
21 plate or sticker for commercial motor vehicles, the department
22 may issue an electronic identifying device."

23 SECTION 2. Section 66-3-17 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1978,
24 Chapter 35, Section 37, as amended) is amended to read:

25 "66-3-17. REGISTRATION PLATE--REPLACEMENT OF PLATE.--

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1 A. Succeeding registration renewals of the
2 registration plate issued under Section 66-3-14 NMSA 1978 shall
3 cause the [~~division~~] department to issue a validating sticker
4 only, except as provided in Subsections B [~~and C~~] through D of
5 this section.

6 B. The person to whom the plate is issued may, at
7 any time, apply for the issuance of a duplicate or replacement
8 plate, and upon the surrender of the registration plate [~~he~~]
9 the person then has, along with the payment of a reasonable fee
10 set by the [~~director~~] secretary that will cover the cost of the
11 production and distribution of the plate, the applicant shall
12 be issued a duplicate or replacement plate.

13 C. Any peace officer may, upon discovering that the
14 registration plate of any vehicle is illegible because of wear
15 or damage or other cause, issue a citation to the owner or
16 operator of the vehicle. The citation shall provide that the
17 owner shall, within thirty days from the date of the citation,
18 apply for and obtain a duplicate or replacement plate from the
19 [~~division~~] department.

20 D. Except for vehicles registered pursuant to
21 Section 66-3-27 or 66-3-423 NMSA 1978, registration renewals of
22 a registration plate issued under Section 66-3-14 NMSA 1978
23 shall cause the department to issue a registration plate until
24 two legible plates have been issued for the motor vehicle."

25 SECTION 3. Section 66-3-18 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1978,
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1 Chapter 35, Section 38, as amended) is amended to read:

2 "66-3-18. DISPLAY OF REGISTRATION PLATES AND TEMPORARY
3 REGISTRATION PERMITS--DISPLAYS PROHIBITED AND ALLOWED.--

4 A. ~~[The registration plate]~~ Except for vehicles
5 registered pursuant to Section 66-3-27 or 66-3-423 NMSA 1978,
6 registration plates shall be attached to the front and the rear
7 of the vehicle for which ~~[it is]~~ they are issued ~~[however, the~~
8 ~~registration plate shall be attached to the front of a road~~
9 ~~tractor or truck tractor]~~. The ~~[plate]~~ plates shall be
10 securely fastened at all times in a fixed horizontal position
11 at a height of not less than twelve inches from the ground,
12 measuring from the bottom of the plate. ~~[It]~~ They shall be in
13 a place and position so as to be clearly visible, and ~~[it]~~ they
14 shall be maintained free from foreign material and in a
15 condition to be clearly legible.

16 B. A demonstration or temporary registration permit
17 shall be firmly affixed to the inside left rear window of the
18 vehicle to which it is issued, unless such display presents a
19 safety hazard or the demonstration or temporary registration
20 permit is not visible or readable from that position, in which
21 case, the demonstration or temporary registration permit shall
22 be displayed in such a manner that it is clearly visible from
23 the rear or left side of the vehicle.

24 C. No vehicle while being operated on the highways
25 of this state shall have displayed either on the front or the

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1 rear of the vehicle any registration plate, including
2 validating sticker, other than one issued or validated for the
3 current registration period by the department or any other
4 licensing authority having jurisdiction over the vehicle. No
5 expired registration plate or validating sticker shall be
6 displayed on the vehicle. [~~other than an expired special~~
7 ~~registration plate, which may be exhibited on the front of the~~
8 ~~vehicle.~~

9 ~~D. Nothing contained in this section shall be~~
10 ~~construed as prohibiting the use of a promotional or~~
11 ~~advertising plate on the front of the vehicle.]"~~

12 SECTION 4. A new section of Chapter 66, Article 6 NMSA
13 1978 is enacted to read:

14 "[NEW MATERIAL] FRONT REGISTRATION PLATE FEE.--Except for
15 registration plates issued pursuant to Section 66-3-27,
16 66-3-415 or 66-3-423 NMSA 1978 or issued at no charge pursuant
17 to Section 66-3-409, 66-3-411, 66-3-412, 66-3-413, 66-3-414,
18 66-3-421 or 66-3-424.24 NMSA 1978, in addition to all other
19 fees collected by registration of vehicles pursuant to Section
20 66-3-1 NMSA 1978 or by registration of vehicles pursuant to the
21 Motor Transportation Act, there is imposed on each
22 registration, for each year covered by the registration, a
23 front registration plate fee of two dollars (\$2.00) to be
24 retained by the department and appropriated to the department
25 to defray the cost of making and issuing front registration

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1 plates."

2 SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.--

3 A. The effective date of the provisions of Sections
4 1 through 3 of this act is July 1, 2022.

5 B. The effective date of the provisions of Section
6 4 of this act is July 1, 2018.

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