

HOUSE No. 3446

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

William M. Straus

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to a license plate replacement program.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | DATE ADDED: |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <i>William M. Straus</i> | <i>10th Bristol</i> | <i>1/20/2023</i> |

HOUSE No. 3446

By Representative Straus of Mattapoisett, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 3446) of William M. Straus relative to a license plate replacement program. Transportation.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 3596 OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act relative to a license plate replacement program.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 29, of the General Laws as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting after subsection (d) in section 2ZZZ, a new subsection:

3 (f)Notwithstanding the provisions under subsection (a), all fees collected by the registrar
4 of motor vehicles for each replacement registration plate introduced after 2014 shall be deposited
5 into a retained revenue account to be administered by the registrar of motor vehicles and such
6 collected funds shall be available for expenditure without further appropriation to help defray the
7 costs of any registration plate production program introduced after 2014.

8 SECTION 2. Section 1 of Chapter 90 of the General Laws as appearing in the 2016
9 Official Edition, is hereby amended by deleting the definition of “Number plate” and inserting in
10 place thereof, the following:- “Number plate”, the sign or marker furnished by the registrar on

11 which is displayed the register number of a motor vehicle or trailer assigned to such vehicle by
12 the registrar to identify ownership of the vehicle and notwithstanding that such number plate may
13 also contain additional information required by the registrar and be referred to as a registration
14 plate or license plate.

15 Section 1 of Chapter 90 as so appearing is hereby further amended by deleting the
16 definition of “Register number” and inserting in place thereof the following: - “Register
17 number”, the word or words, letter or letters, mark or marks, character or characters, Arabic
18 numeral or numerals, or combinations thereof assigned by the registrar to a motor vehicle or
19 trailer.

20 SECTION 3. Section 6 of Chapter 90 of the General Laws as appearing in the 2016
21 Official Edition, is hereby amended by deleting the second sentence and inserting in place
22 thereof the following: Said number plates shall be mounted horizontally, shall be kept clean and
23 the register number, the word “Massachusetts,” and any other word, letter, character,
24 abbreviation, symbol, sticker or decal required to be displayed on the plates by the registrar shall
25 be legible and shall not be obscured in any manner by the installation of any device, protective
26 covering, coating or plate frame that in any way obscures said register number or any other item
27 required to be displayed by the registrar on the plate and no number plate may be altered unless
28 authorized in writing by the registrar, and provided that during the period when the vehicle is
29 required to display lights the entire rear number plate shall be illuminated so as to be plainly
30 visible at a distance of 60 feet and provided further that the registrar may issue a registration
31 validation decal upon initial issuance and upon each renewal of the registration which decal shall
32 be mounted on the rear number plate, as required by the registrar, and such decal shall display
33 the month and year or year alone that the vehicle registration is to expire.

34 SECTION 4. Section 6 of Chapter 90, as so appearing is hereby amended by inserting
35 after section 6C the following new section:-

36 Section 6D. Replacement Number Plates; By December 31, 2024, the registrar shall
37 initiate a process to replace all issued plates at least every 10 years. The registrar shall issue new
38 number plates of suitable design, color or type, on a schedule to be determined by the registrar.
39 The registrar may utilize a “rolling” replacement cycle provided that the initial replacement cycle
40 shall be completed no later than 10 years after the date the process is implemented. The registrar
41 may impose a “plate replacement fee” as authorized in section 33, in addition to the established
42 registration fee in that section, to defray the costs incurred with the issuance of plates in a new
43 replacement number series.

44 SECTION 5. Said chapter 90, as so appearing, is hereby further amended in the first
45 subsection of section (33) by changing the title “commissioner of administration” to the
46 “secretary of administration and finance”.

47 SECTION 6. Said chapter 90, as so appearing, is hereby further amended in section 33
48 by inserting after subsection (37) the following:-

49 (38) For the issuance of each replacement plate as identified in section 6D of this
50 chapter, the registrar may charge a plate replacement fee.

51 SECTION 7. Said chapter 90, as so appearing, is hereby further amended in section 34
52 by removing the period at the end thereof and inserting the following:- “; except that (iv) the fee
53 collected for each replacement registration plate issued under authority of section 6D of this
54 chapter shall be deposited into a retained revenue fund established pursuant to chapter 29,
55 section 2ZZZ (f) to be administered by the registrar of motor vehicles in the department of

56 transportation, and such collected funds shall be available for expenditure without further
57 appropriation to help defray the costs of the registration plate production program.