

SENATE No. 2387

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Senate, July 27, 2012.

BILL #: S02299

BILL STATUS: Favorable with Amendment

DISSENTERS:

None

ACCOMPANIED BILLS:

None

For the committee,

STEPHEN M. BREWER

SENATE No. 2387

The committee on Ways and Means, to whom was referred the Senate bill to enhance the license plate system of the Commonwealth (Senate, No. 2299); reports, recommending that the same ought to pass with an amendment substituting a new draft entitled An Act relative to license plates in the Commonwealth (Senate, No. 2387).

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Twelve

An Act relative to license plates in the commonwealth.

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. For the purposes of this act, “enhanced recognition and identification
2 registration plate” shall be a registration plate that has the capability to incorporate:

3 (a) commonly recognizable symbols, which are easily identifiable, with each symbol
4 having a corresponding 3 character alpha-numeric reference, with not more than 2 characters
5 identifying the symbol and 1 character representing the location of the symbol on the plate, such
6 that both the symbol and the references may be placed in a variety of locations on the plate to
7 maximize the number of individual combinations that may be produced in conjunction with
8 standard letters and numbers;

9 (b) existing and innovative technologies and componentry to aid in the identification of
10 characters in conditions that result in poor-visibility, including, but not limited to, nighttime and
11 inclement weather;

12 (c) not more than 4 alpha-numeric characters; and

13 (d) distinctive and low-number plates, including plates authorized under sections 2 and
14 2E of chapter 90 of the General Laws, as well as any distinctive registration plates issued by the
15 registrar under section 2F of said chapter 90.

16 SECTION 2. If designing, developing, procuring or implementing an information
17 management system as a successor or replacement to its Automated License and Registration
18 System, the registrar of motor vehicles shall, in good faith, attempt to ensure that such system is
19 consistent with the technology necessary to effectively utilize enhanced recognition and
20 identification registration plates. Nothing in this section shall limit the ability of the registrar to
21 make necessary changes and improvements to the current Automated License and Registration
22 System, or limit the registrar from designing, developing, procuring or implementing a successor
23 system that is not compliant with enhanced recognition and identification registration plates if
24 the registrar determines a system compatible with enhanced recognition and identification
25 registration plates is not in the best interest of the registry of motor vehicles or the
26 commonwealth.

27 SECTION 3. There is hereby established a special task force to analyze the feasibility of
28 a registration plate system utilizing enhanced recognition and identification registration plates.
29 The task force shall consist of the registrar of motor vehicles, who shall serve as the chair; the
30 colonel of the state police or a designee; a representative of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police
31 Association; a representative of the criminal justice information systems; a designee from the
32 Molly Bish Center for Missing and Exploited Children; the secretary of administration and
33 finance or a designee; a representative of the American Automobile Association; a representative
34 of the Massachusetts Correctional Industries; the secretary of the executive office of public
35 safety and security or a designee; a representative of the State Police Association of

36 Massachusetts; a member of a labor organization representing police officers designated by the
37 governor; a designee appointed by the senate president; a designee appointed by the minority
38 leader of the senate; a designee appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; and a
39 designee appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives.

40 The study shall include, but not be limited to, short-term and long-term costs to the
41 commonwealth, time frame for implementation, impact on federal, state and local law
42 enforcement and between states and the tools and equipment necessary to produce enhanced
43 recognition and identification registration plates. The study shall assess: (i) human reaction to
44 numbers, letters, characters and symbols and the ability to cognitively process such numbers,
45 letters, characters and symbols; (ii) transportation-based factors including, but not limited to, the
46 impact on toll revenues; (iii) interfaces with motor vehicle databases in other states including,
47 without limitation, any licensing and registration system used by the registry of motor vehicles;
48 and (iv) criminal information system accessibility.

49 The task force may conduct 1 or more public hearings to inform the public of its
50 activities. The report of the task force shall be filed with the clerks of the senate and the house of
51 representatives not later than December 31, 2013.