

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Tarr, Bruce (SEN)

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 passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act to enhance the license plate system of the Commonwealth

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Tarr, Bruce (SEN)

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Essex and Middlesex

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. S02097 OF .]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Nine

AN ACT TO ENHANCE THE LICENSE PLATE SYSTEM OF 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. The registrar is hereby authorized and directed pursuant to the authority
2 granted by Section 2 of Chapter 90 of the general laws to develop, design and implement a
3 redesigned plate system for motor vehicles registered in the Commonwealth, provided further
4 that such system shall be fully implemented not later than five years following the passage of this
5 act. Said plate shall incorporate technology and design components and advances to increase the
6 illumination and visual recognition of said plates. Said plates shall incorporate, but shall not be
7 limited to, the following:

8 1. The utilization of commonly recognizable symbols, which are easily identifiable, with
9 each symbol having a corresponding three character alpha-numeric reference, with no
10 more than two characters identifying the symbol, and one character representing the
11 location of the symbol on the plate, such that both the symbol and the references may be

12 placed in a variety of locations on the plate, so as to the maximize the number of
13 individual combinations which may be produced in conjunction with standard letters and
14 numbers.

15 2. The utilization of existing and innovative technologies and componentry to aid in the
16 identification of characters in conditions that result in poor-visibility, including during
17 nighttime and inclement weather.

18 3. The reduction of the number of standard alpha-numeric characters currently utilized for
19 such plates to no more than a total of four.

20 4. The utilization of specialized symbols either supplied by the registrar or developed by
21 private charitable interests and approved by the registrar pursuant to the requirements of
22 this act, provided that the use such symbol shall be conditioned on the payment of a fee in
23 addition to that required for a vehicle registration pursuant to section 2 of chapter 90.

24 5. The accommodation of all currently issued distinctive and low-number plates, so-called,
25 including plates authorized under sections 2 and 2E of Chapter 90, as well as any
26 additional distinctive license plates issued by the registrar pursuant to the requirements of
27 section 2F of Chapter 90.

28 There shall be hereby created and established a registration plate design and implementation
29 board, hereinafter the board. The board shall consist of eight members, the Registrar of motor
30 vehicles or his designee, who also shall be the chair, the Secretary of the Executive Office of
31 Public Safety or his designee, the Colonel of the Department of State Police or his designee, the
32 Executive Director of the Criminal System Histories Board or his designee, the Executive

33 Director of the Municipal Police Training Committee or his designee, a representative of the
34 Governor's Highway Safety Bureau, a representative of the Massachusetts Chief's of Police
35 Association, and a representative of the Massachusetts Safety Officers Association. The board
36 shall approve a design and establish protocols for the implementation of a redesigned plate
37 system that provides for additional public safety through the simplification of plate design for the
38 purposes of enhancing the recognition, recall and identification of plates. In addition, the board
39 shall develop training protocols for utilization of the redesigned plate for public safety officers.
40 The board shall report to the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security regarding
41 any issues relating the design or implementation of said plate system not later than six months of
42 the passage of this act.

43 The registrar may, in carrying out the provisions of this Act, enter into one or more contracts for
44 the design, development, implementation, maintenance or production of said plate system.

45 Section 2. There shall be hereby established and set up on the books of the Commonwealth a
46 special fund to be known as the License Plate Symbol Revenue Fund, hereinafter called the fund,
47 into which shall be deposited any funds granted by the issuance of specialized symbols created to
48 the provisions of item 4, in section 1 of this act. The primary purpose of the fund shall be to
49 make expenditures in order to facilitate the implementation of the license plate program
50 developed pursuant to this act, and the secondary purpose of the fund shall be to distribute funds
51 to specific charitable programs or purposes as specified for specialized symbols as authorized
52 pursuant to the provisions of item 4 of section 1 of this act.

53 Section 3. In carrying out the provisions of this Act, the registrar shall consult with the
54 American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators and any other necessary agencies of the

55 federal government, national or regional organizations, and any necessary state agencies to
56 determine the feasibility, including costs and advantages and disadvantages, of developing and
57 implementing the plate system prescribed by Section 1 of this Act. The registrar shall report the
58 findings of said feasibility analysis to the Clerks of the House and Senate, the Joint Committee
59 on Transportation and the Joint Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety not later
60 than six months following the passage of this Act.

61 Section 4. Sections 1 and 2 of this Act shall take effect ninety days following the filing of the
62 feasibility analysis by the registrar as provided in Section 3.

63