

AAMVA Regional News

June 22, 2012

Tidbits

The new CDL grantee manual (Version 2 – with the green cover) is now available in PDF form on the FMCSA public website, under grantee resources. Access the link by [clicking here](#).

Region I News

Delaware to Fine Slow Drivers

Delaware lawmakers are hoping House Bill 140 will curb slow driving and road rage. The bill imposes fines on drivers who are going under the speed limit in the left lane. First-time offenders can expect a fine of at least \$28 and could go up to \$230. Legislators are hoping the bill will get people out of the left lane. Slow driving repeat offenders could receive fines of up to \$575 per offense. [Read the full story at WBOC.com](#).

Two Measures to Crack Down on Drunken Drivers Moving Through State House *(Massachusetts)*

If all goes as state Senate and House leaders expect, Massachusetts will have tougher law against drunken drivers this summer. The two chambers are both pursuing separate means to the same end, which is closing the so-called "loophole" in Melanie's Law, which was passed in 2005 to stiffen penalties for driving under the influence. It's named after 13-year-old Melanie Powell, who was killed by a repeat drunken driver as she crossed a street in Marshfield in 2003. While the current law calls for an offender's license to be suspended for three years on a second offense, it does not count cases that are continued without a finding (CWOFF) as an offense. In those cases, a defendant will admit to committing the crime but the charge against him or her will be dropped after a certain length of time provided no new crimes are committed. This was the case for Paul Souza, who had a 1997 drunken-driving case continued without a finding but then refused a breathalyzer test in 2010 in Norton, which the RMV viewed as a second offense. Souza took the Registry to court, arguing that the 1997 case should not have counted as an offense. On May 17, the Supreme Judicial Court agreed with him. The ruling triggered an immediate reaction in both chambers of the Legislature. On May 19, the Senate filed an act to enhance Melanie's Law by considering CWOFF cases as offenses. Within days, the Senate voted unanimously on the act, which was added as an amendment to the fiscal 2013 bill. The same day the Senate took up the cause, the House filed a standalone bill to toughen Melanie's Law. Within 24 hours, 30 representatives had signed on to co-sponsor the bill. The Senate amendment is now in committee, being hammered out as part of the bigger fiscal bill, and House leadership is hopeful that their measure will come up for a vote soon. [Read the full story in West Roxbury Patch](#).

New Jersey Assembly to Vote On Tougher Driver's License Rules

Legislation that would increase requirements for young people to get driver's licenses has been approved in the New Jersey Assembly - even though Gov. Christie vetoed an identical bill earlier this year. Under the bill approved 52-26 Thursday, those under the age of 18 who apply for a learner's or examination permit - and at least 1 of their parents - would have to complete a teen driver program. The measure also requires drivers under 21 to log at least 50 hours of practice driving before getting a probationary license. Drivers ages 16 to 20 would have a permit for a year, rather than six months. And the bill requires the current six hours of certified driving instruction be private, one-on-one instruction. The bill now goes to the Senate. [Read the full story at ABC27](#).

[New Jersey License Change for Teens OK'd](#)

Legislation that would increase requirements for young people to get driver's licenses has been approved in the Assembly — even though Gov. Chris Christie vetoed an identical bill earlier this year. Under the approved bill, those under the age of 18 who apply for a learner's or examination permit — and at least one of their parents — would have to complete a teen driver program. The measure also requires drivers under 21 to log at least 50 hours of practice driving before getting a probationary license. Drivers ages 16 to 20 would have a permit for a year, rather than six months. And the bill requires the current six hours of certified driving instruction be private, one-on-one instruction. The bill now goes to the Senate. [Read the full story in the Courier Post On-Line.](#)

[New Jersey Slams the Brakes on Controversial Red Light Cameras](#)

New Jersey has suspended its controversial red-light camera program over questions about the accuracy of the devices that have frustrated motorists while generating millions of dollars for towns. Officials from DOT said 63 of the 85 red-light cameras in New Jersey have not been tested to ensure yellow lights were timed in accordance with the statute that created the pilot program. Beginning Wednesday, tickets will not be issued at those 63 locations until it is determined whether the traffic systems are in compliance with the law. In the meantime, the cameras will remain on. If the devices are found to be in compliance, violators would still be fined. If the traffic systems are not in compliance, the camera will be shut down. The other 22 cameras are working properly and are not affected. [Read the full story in NJ.com.](#)

[Albany Bill on Organ Donation Urges License Applicants to Act](#) *(New York)*

The New York Legislature passed a measure on Wednesday aimed at increasing the low number of organ donors in the state by encouraging driver's license applicants to make an active choice about their donation status. If the bill is signed by Gov. Cuomo, New York will become the second state, along with California, to make such a change in its donor registration process. In 2010, the last year for which comparative figures are available, only 15% of New Yorkers 18 or older had registered to be organ donors, according to Donate Life America. That was the second lowest rate in the country, behind only Texas. The national average was 40%. After the Assembly acted on Tuesday night, the Senate gave unanimous approval on Wednesday to Lauren's law, named for a young heart transplant survivor. The measure would change driver's license forms to include a section that applicants "must fill out" by either joining the organ donor registry or choosing to "skip this question." Currently, filling out that section on the license application is clearly optional. Despite the new mandatory language, the bill stipulates that failure to check a box cannot be used to invalidate an application, meaning there is no real enforcement mechanism. [Read the full story in the New York Times.](#)

[With Speed-Camera Bill, More Writing of Tickets May Be Going Hands-Free](#) *(New York)*

Under a proposal now gaining traction in Albany, New Yorkers may soon be answering to an authority more suited to the city's topography: cameras that record the speed of a passing car and issue violations automatically. Though similar programs have already been put into effect for red-light and bus-lane violation. The proposal initially calls for as many as 40 cameras to be mounted high across the city, of which 20 can be rotated, ensuring that drivers are never certain when their speed is being tracked. Only those who exceed the city's speed limit, typically 30 miles per hour, by more than 10 miles per hour would be given tickets, receiving a \$50 fine. For those who exceed the limit by more than 30 m.p.h., the fine doubles to \$100. Drivers would not be docked points on their licenses. [Read the full story in the New York Times.](#)

[House Approves Ban on "Secret Compartments" In Vehicles](#) *(Pennsylvania)*

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives has approved a bill to outlaw the use of "false or secret" compartments in vehicles. The bill passed with a vote of 114-83, despite objections by critics who say the law is unnecessary and

will result in unreasonable searches of innocent citizens. The bill's sponsor says the law will help crack down on the illegal trafficking of drugs, guns, money and even people. If enacted, the law will ban any modification to a private vehicle that creates any enclosure outside the manufacturer's original specifications. The bill is on its way to the Senate for a vote. [Read the full story in Coudy News.](#)

Region II News

DMV Allows Some Schools to Offer Tests *(South Carolina)*

The South Carolina DMV is trying out a new system that allows first-time drivers to take both written and road skill driving tests at 30 commercial driver training schools across the state. The new program began this week in 13 counties. It will be evaluated after several months to see if it is working properly and whether it can be expanded. The schools must use DMV-trained instructors, and their road test routes must be approved in advance by the DMV. Applicants are told that they might be tested again when they go to the local DMV to get their license. Those who pass the written test and road skills test after attending a commercial driving school will be given a certificate to take to their local DMV to obtain their driver's license. Because the new system is being considered a "pilot" program until about September, the DMV will conduct random tests and audits at the schools to ensure DMV standards are being met. If a school does not meet the requirements, the DMV can cancel or suspend their agreement with each school and revoke an instructor's certification. [Read the full story in The Item.](#)

DMV Pilots Third Party Tester Program in 13 Counties *(South Carolina)*

The DMV has announced a partnership with several driver training schools to pilot a Class D Third Party Tester Program in 13 counties during the summer. The program allows these schools to administer the knowledge and skills tests to persons applying for a first time Class D, passenger vehicle beginner permit or driver license. The program gives driver training schools a great opportunity to expand their services. It also allows us to outsource one of our most time-consuming transactions and reduce wait times in DMV offices. When the pilot program ends, DMV will offer it statewide. Officials expect to complete the pilot this fall. Although the program is new for Class D driver training schools, the Third Party Tester program itself is not. South Carolina law requires DMV to contract with other entities to administer the knowledge and skills tests. The agency offers similar programs for Class M motorcycle and commercial driver licenses. To participate, each driver training school must meet all DMV requirements. All driver skills test routes must also be approved by DMV. During the pilot, DMV will monitor the program before expanding it statewide. Applicants who successfully complete the Class D Third Party Tester program may be subject to re-testing once they arrive at a DMV office to get a driver license. If a school does not meet the requirements of South Carolina law or regulations, DMV may suspend or cancel the school's Class D Third Party Tester agreement or an individual instructor's certification. The monitoring process includes random testing and audits. Some applicants who successfully complete the Class D Third Party Tester program will be subject to re-testing once they arrive at a DMV office to obtain a driver license. The agency will also perform audits to ensure DMV requirements are met. DMV may suspend or cancel the school's Class D Third Party Tester contract or an individual instructor's certification. More than 30 driver training schools will participate in the pilot program. DMV trained and certified at least one instructor from each school in the Class D Third Party Tester program. [Read the DMV press release.](#)

Illegal Drivers License Ring Busted By U.S. Homeland Security *(SC, GA, TN, NM)*

Special agents from U.S. Homeland Security Investigations have broken up another illegal driver's license ring. U.S. Prosecutors unsealed indictments against 30 people in South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and five people in New Mexico on Wednesday. The defendants are accused of transporting aliens across state lines, conspiracy to transport fraudulent documents, and helping people in the U.S. illegally pass driving tests. Papers filed in court

allege ring organizers on the East Coast paid New Mexico residents to allow their "customers" to use local mailing addresses for utility bills and used private MVD business employees to notarize false documents. The state has attracted illegal operators because it does not require proof of U.S. Citizenship. U.S. agents and prosecutors were not allowed to talk about the details of their months long operation, but paperwork filed in Federal Court show the organizers began recruiting people in New Mexico to help them with the license scheme in July 2009. New Mexico Tax and Revenue staff has also been tracking the ring and plan to suspend 164 licenses. [Read the full story at KOB.com](#). [Read a related story in GSN Magazine, "Dozens Sought In New Mexico/South Carolina Driver's License Scheme"](#).

DMV to Increase Fees (Virginia)

Starting July 1, Virginians who renew their vehicle registrations after they expire will face a \$10 late fee. According to the DMV, drivers can renew their decals at www.dmvNOW.com or via telephone at 1-888-337-4782. Starting on the same date, Virginians who lose their driver's licenses will have to pay \$20 instead of \$10. "On average, it costs DMV about \$26.85 to issue a driver's license," DMV Commissioner Richard Holcomb said. "Having a minimum price for all licenses will allow DMV to recover more of its costs." The DMV will also start charging a standardized \$10 fee for all vehicle titles, including replacements and supplemental titles. Holcomb says most Virginians won't notice the change in fees. "Most Virginians will see no change since the costs for an on-time registration renewal, standard driver's license and vehicle title will remain the same." [Read the full story in WAVY-TV](#).

Region III News

Woman Sues BMV over Losing Driver's License (Indiana)

A woman is suing the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles for suspending her driver's license over not having auto insurance even though she didn't have a car to drive at the time. The American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana filed the lawsuit Wednesday. The suit claims BMV made a list of previously uninsured motorists and began checking to see if they later obtained insurance. The agency suspended Lourrinne White's license when she didn't respond. White says she didn't get the notice. The suit says White had just bought a car but didn't insure or drive it because it didn't run. The suit says White wasn't otherwise required to carry insurance and that the BMV didn't publicize the rule. [Read the full story in the Courier-Journal](#).

License Office Worker Stole Licenses to Buy Meth Ingredient (Missouri)

An employee of the Maplewood License Office is facing 14 counts of forgery after authorities said she used expired driver's licenses to buy pseudoephedrine, the key ingredient in methamphetamine. Mary Ann Busch, 38, was charged June 8. She obtained the driver's licenses when people came to the license office to renew their licenses and turn in their old ones. She then used the licenses and forged the names of eight women on electronic purchase logs maintained by Walgreens that track pseudoephedrine sales. The purchases were made between November and January. Maplewood police arrested her Feb. 1 after a clerk from a Walgreens in Richmond Heights contacted one of the victims to ask if she was trying to buy pseudoephedrine. That victim then contacted police. Her bail has been set at \$15,000. [Read the full story in St. Louis Today](#).

Ohio Changes Planned Superman License Plate Design

Plans for a Superman license plate in Ohio are being altered because the slogan doesn't match the origin story for the Man of Steel. The story says he was born on the planet Krypton, but fans of the comic superhero know he was created by two teenagers near Cleveland in the 1930s. A nonprofit society honoring those creators proposed a license plate with the famous "S" insignia and the slogan "Ohio - Birthplace of Superman." DC Comics and Warner

Communications were concerned about the birthplace reference, so officials plan to come up with a different slogan. The sponsor of the license plate bill says he hopes it's passed quickly to make the Superman plates available for the 75th anniversary next year. [Read the full story at FOX.](#)

One Man's Failed Attempt to Open His Own DMV (Wisconsin)

The line to get a license from this 'freelance' Department of Motor Vehicles 'employee' was definitely short. Unfortunately, it was illegal. A 26-year-old Milwaukee man is now facing charges after he allegedly tried to sell a temporary license plate in a Menomonee Falls parking lot. Montreal L. Davis, 26, was charged Wednesday with one count of unlawful sale of registration. If convicted, he faces up to six years in prison and \$10,000 in fines. According to the criminal complaint: A Wisconsin DOT official contacted the Menomonee Falls Police Department after he spotted an ad on Craigslist selling a temporary Wisconsin license plate. Investigators agreed to buy the license plate for \$25 and complete the deal in a parking lot. Davis showed up to the deal and sold the plate. He was pulled over shortly after leaving the deal and taken into custody. Davis said his fiancé had the plate on a 2011 Impala she had purchased and had just gotten her permanent plates, so he decided to sell the temporary ones. He said he didn't know it was illegal to sell the plates. He's currently free on a \$500 signature bond while awaiting trial. [Read the full story in the Menomonee Falls Patch.](#)

Region IV News

Illegal Immigrants May Be Able To Acquire Driver's Licenses (Arizona)

The decision by the Obama administration to provide work permits to some illegal immigrants could result in them being able to get Arizona driver licenses. DOT is studying last week's directive which allows many who were brought to the country as children to seek to defer being prosecuted for being in this country illegally and to avoid being deported. Under a 1996 Arizona law, anyone seeking a driver's license must prove both identity and legal presence in this country. The same requirement exists for non-operator identification cards issued by ADOT. Technically speaking, Friday's move does not grant legal status anyone who entered the country illegally or overstayed a visa. But the order does say those who qualify will be issued permits by the federal government entitling them to work in this country legally. At this time it's not known how or if DHS announcement to exercise discretion will affect the requirements for credential issuances. It will take about 60 days for DHS to implement the directive. How many Arizonans might be affected remains unclear. DHS is using a figure of 800,000 nationwide. [Read the full story in Your West Valley.](#)

British Columbia's Drinking and Driving Laws Return

B.C.'s tough drinking and driving laws go back into effect tomorrow after undergoing some tinkering following a court ruling. The rules first took effect in September of 2010, but a B.C. Supreme Court later ruled the law didn't provide a proper appeal process for someone who's judged to have failed a roadside breath test. Under the revised law, a driver can have a second test if they fail the first one and the lower of the two readings will prevail. Police must also provide sworn reports on every roadside ban they issue and must also submit documents confirming the accuracy of the breathalyzers they use. [Read the full story in The Vancouver Sun.](#)

Ashton Kutcher Production Company Sues DMV for Backing Out of Reality Series (California)

Ashton Kutcher Katalyst Media, the production company run by Ashton Kutcher and Jason Goldberg, is suing California's DMV for allegedly getting cold feet and backing out of a deal to participate in a reality series based on its employees. In a lawsuit filed Tuesday in Los Angeles Superior Court, Katalyst and production company Soda and Pop, Inc. claim they are owed at least \$1.44 million in damages for breach of contract. Katalyst, which has produced reality series Punk'd, Beauty and the Geek and True Beauty, says it negotiated in 2010 with the DMV to

develop a half-hour reality series featuring employees and patrons of the DMV. "The series was conceived and designed to capture the variously humorous, emotional, dramatic, moving, humanizing and entertaining situations that arise on a daily basis at DMV's more than 170 offices across the state of California," according to the complaint. But after getting a commitment in writing to work together on four initial episodes and up to six possible seasons of the show, and after Katalyst secured a deal with cable network TruTV to air the show, the DMV is said to have "abruptly and without justifiable excuse, changed course," according to the suit. "In a five sentence letter to Katalyst producer Jason Goldberg, [DMV deputy director Mike] Marando simply declared that DMV no longer considered the series to be in its 'best interests' and would therefore 'not be moving forward on such a project.'" [Read the full story in the Hollywood Reporter.](#)

Fake Driver's License Steers Kerman Man Toward Prison *(California)*

The California DMV does not maintain an office in Kerman. But for Jose Manuel Garcia, that was no inconvenience since he had a buddy who could get him a faked driver's license that was just as good. As long as he didn't get caught. But caught he was and now Mr. Garcia, 44, has pleaded guilty to federal charges of conspiracy to unlawfully produce and transfer identification documents -- California driver's licenses. According to his plea agreement, Mr. Garcia admitted he fraudulently obtained a Class A commercial driver's license after providing information about himself to co-defendant Victor Vasquez, who in turn passed the information on to a DMV employee who altered Mr. Garcia's license application to reflect that he had taken and passed all required DMV driving tests. Mr. Garcia admitted he paid Mr. Vasquez and the DMV employee to alter the records. Mr. Garcia also admitted that he recruited another person who fraudulently obtained a Class C California drivers license by the same means. Now the road to a fake license is taking Mr. Garcia toward federal prison. He is scheduled to be sentenced September 10, when he will face up to five years imprisonment. The DMV employee, co-defendant Alfonso Casarez, and seven other co-defendants currently await trial. [Read the full story in the Central Valley Business Times.](#)

Colorado Wins Silver Communicator Award for "Save Time, Renew Online" Campaign with Guy VROOM

The Colorado, Donor Alliance and Colorado.gov announced that their joint "Save Time, Renew Online" multimedia campaign utilizing the fictitious character Guy VROOM, was recognized with a Silver Communicator Award in the not-for-profit category by the International Academy of Visual Arts (IAVA) 2012 Communicator Awards. The campaign aims to educate Coloradans about the ability to renew their driver's licenses online and register to be organ, eye and tissue donors. .The campaign was born out of the DMV's need to increase online license renewals and reduce foot traffic to state driver's license offices in time for 5- and 10-year licenses expiring at high rates in 2012 and 2013. The award-winning campaign is led by the character Guy VROOM, a comical, mullet-wearing "dude" stuck in the '80s. Guy VROOM encourages people to renew licenses online by skipping the lines at the DMV and to remain "youthful and fun" by keeping their old photo. "Save Time, Renew Online" was introduced to Coloradans in 2011 with a direct mail campaign, a public service announcement, social media activities and DMV posters. In the communications, Guy VROOM, instructs Colorado residents to "Save Time, Renew Online" and also encourages them to register as organ, eye and tissue donors at the same time. The campaign contributed to impressive gains in just one year: 109,204 Coloradoan's renewed their driver's license online in 2011, which was an increase from 87,000 the prior year. Online renewals are on pace to increase 34% this year. This will decrease wait times by reducing over 160,000 customers in DMV offices. More than 73% of Colorado drivers that renew online say "yes" to organ, eye and tissue donation. This is a six percent higher election rate than those renewing in DMV offices. The Communicators Awards receive more than 6,000 entries annually from all over the world. Every Communicator Award winner is selected by IAVA members, an invitation-only body consisting of top-tier professionals from acclaimed media, communications, advertising and marketing firms. [Click here](#) to see the award winning Guy VROOM campaign. [Read the full story in Businesswire.com.](#)

Lawmakers Decline to Outlaw 'Distracted Walking' (Utah)

Legislators slammed the brakes Wednesday on a Utah Transit Authority request to make "distracted walking" around railroads a violation of state law. "You can't legislate [not being] stupid," said Rep. Craig Frank, R-Pleasant Grove. "This is way out of bounds. I'm surprised we have the guts to look at stuff like this." Most of the Transportation Interim Committee agreed, and voted 11-4 to reject adopting UTA's proposal as a committee bill. Earlier this year, UTA adopted an ordinance to allow \$50 civil fines for distracted walking around trains — for such offenses as talking on cell phones, listening to music with headphones or texting. But if people choose not to pay the fines, the worst UTA could do is ban them from using its system. UTA also asked lawmakers to start considering a potential law that would force cars to yield to transit buses signaling to re-enter traffic. Jones said it would help clarify who has the right of way, reduce accidents and improve traffic flow. UTA has not drafted a bill yet on the issue. [Read the full story in the Salt Lake City Tribune.](#)

Lawmakers Consider A Passenger Limit for Wyoming Teens with Restricted or Hardship Licenses

An interim legislative committee will consider a proposal that would block teen drivers who have a restricted license from traveling with more than one passenger under the age of 18 who is not a member of their immediate family. The Wyoming Highway Patrol recommended the proposal last week to the Legislature's Joint Transportation, Highways and Military Affairs Committee. Col. John Butler, WHP, told lawmakers that he supports the change because of the safety risks associated with having multiple passengers with a young driver. Restricted licenses allow 14- or 15-year-olds to drive on their own as long as they meet certain "hardship" requirements and then follow several driving restrictions. The license is largely designed for teenagers who live on farms or in rural parts of the state. Current restrictions include driving only to certain locations, staying within a 50-mile radius from home and driving only during the day. Legislators intend to examine the hours that restricted license holders can legally drive. Currently, drivers with restricted licenses can only drive from 5 a.m.-8 p.m. Fifteen-year-olds with the license can drive beyond that period only if they have a licensed adult in their vehicle. Several lawmakers suggested extending the 8 p.m. restriction to 11 p.m. [Read the full story in The Republic.](#)

Did you know . . .

- *According to new data from career site the FIT's Report on Workplace Culture:*
- *Women work longer days and weeks than men, they work more on vacation but they also report greater perceived satisfaction with their compensation.*
- *On vacation, many (65%) employees of both sexes do work, but women are slightly more willing to do so than men (67% to 60%).*
- *Women perceive their compensation more positively than men. Of respondents who reported receiving a bonus (49%).*
- *On compensation and salaries, women fared better than men again in terms of perception. 26% of men said their friends would feel bad for them if they knew how much they made, compared with 17% of women*