

Regional News From AAMVA – February 1, 2013

Tidbits

Registration for our Spring Workshop and Law Institute is now open! Join us from March 12-13 in Atlanta, GA for this exciting meeting featuring numerous educational and networking opportunities. Learn what AAMVA is all about and how it can help you in your job. Meet with industry representatives who have services and products that solve your issues. Attend one of four Town Halls to find out the latest in the motor vehicle and law enforcement industry. For more information and to register, visit <http://www.aamva.org/2013-Workshop-Landing/>.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, fear of flying spurred Americans to drive more miles, and the additional miles led to increased traffic fatalities. There were 1.11 additional traffic fatalities per million inhabitants, on average, in the U.S. during the post-September months of 2001; typically, fatalities decrease slightly during those months of the year.

Do you have a news item you'd like to include in next week's Regional News? Send news tips and articles to Claire O'Brien at cobrien@aamva.org.

Region I News

State Cites Security in Keeping Embossed Plates (Pennsylvania)

Pennsylvania DOT will continue to produce raised-number license plates as other states switch to flatter digitized ones, and the agency says the raised numbers make it difficult for plates to be replicated or counterfeited. These plates go through two print runs, one to print the background graphics and one to stamp and paint the plate numbers. With digitized plates, all items on the plate can be printed simultaneously in a process comparable to printing from a computer. [Read the full story at the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)

Maryland Adopts FMCSA Rule to Help Military Veterans Become Professional Truck, Bus Drivers

The Maryland Department of Motor Vehicles recently adopted a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration provision that shortens the process for military veterans to obtain a commercial driver's license in an effort to help them quickly transition to civilian careers as professional truck or bus drivers. FMCSA's rule, issued nearly two years ago, waives the driver skills test in the CDL process for qualifying veterans who already have two years of experience safely driving a commercial motor vehicle in the military. Since the FMCSA issued this rule, 44 states have either adopted the veterans provision or are in the process of adopting it. [Read the full story at School Transportation News.](#)

Fake ID Mills Operating in D.C. Area

Passports, green cards, employment authorization cards and social security cards are all important documents that prove residency, travel and work eligibility in the U.S. But ICE

Homeland Security Investigations authorities say these types of documents are at the center of underground fake ID mills operating in local neighborhoods that could lead to a national security threat." Unfortunately for some people, if they want to do harm in the U.S., they use fraudulent documents and take it to the next level," says ICE HSI Special Agent in Charge John Torres. According to several recent indictments, more than a dozen suspects allegedly running two separate rings near the Columbia Heights Metro Station and Hyattsville would use their cell phone to receive a customer's information and picture. They would then use computers and printers to make the fake ID's, selling the documents for \$100 or more in a matter of minutes. [Read the full article at WJLA](#)

[Spike in Flood- and Salvage-Titled Vehicles Following Sandy Prompts Outreach \(New Jersey\)](#)

With a nearly 6,000 percent spike in flood-damaged and salvage vehicle titles processed in the past three months, the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission and Division of Consumer Affairs announced a partnership to educate the public and prevent consumers from unknowingly inheriting the problems of a vehicle damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The most notable component of the partnership is the creation of an online Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) database that consumers may access 24/7 to verify whether a vehicle was damaged because of flooding or other means. More than 13,000 vehicles that have been processed by the MVC as either flood- or salvage-titled since Oct. 27 are posted in a searchable database on the Consumer Affairs website (www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/floodedcars) by VIN, make, model and year. MVC and Consumer Affairs officials announced the launch of the new database and discussed how consumers can avoid being defrauded when purchasing a used vehicle, while at a storage lot here operated by Insurance Auto Auctions that contains hundreds of vehicles damaged by Hurricane Sandy. [Read the full article on mycentraljersey.com](#)

[Massachusetts Worker Accused of Giving Illegal Licenses](#)

Federal prosecutors have charged a former worker at the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles with giving driver's licenses to people he knew were using false identities. Prosecutors said Wednesday that 24-year-old Alexander Brewer of Boston was working in the RMV's Revere office. They say he allowed people he knew were using legal Puerto Rico identity documents that didn't belong to them to get state driver's licenses. RMV Registrar Rachel Kaprielian said in a statement that Brewer worked as a customer service representative for the agency from August 2010 until recently. She said the RMV's auditors discovered the irregularities and reported them to law enforcement. Brewer is charged with conspiracy to defraud the federal government by producing false identification documents. It's not immediately known if he has an attorney. [Read the full article in itemlive.com](#)

[RFI Posted](#)

The 4 Atlantic Canada provinces issued an RFI today for the following:

1. Automated Driver Knowledge Test systems,
2. Road Testing systems and
3. Web based Client Scheduling systems

The four Atlantic Registrars intend to continue seeking new opportunities to utilize a combined approach and are currently gathering information regarding the potential implementation of

new Automated Driver Knowledge Test systems, Road Testing systems and web based Client Scheduling systems for the benefit of the constituents of Atlantic Canada. Through this Request for Information (RFI) the Registrars are hoping to identify potential solutions and technologies that may be included in any future solicitation that can assist to address the business and technical requirements for the four provinces in the areas of Automated Driver Knowledge Test (ADKT) systems, Road Testing (RT) (mobile) systems and Client Scheduling (CS) Systems.

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/tenders/gettender.php3?number=3849>

New York Worker Accused of Tampering with DWI Records

A long-time state motor vehicle department worker has been accused of illegally altering records to make it appear an acquaintance wasn't required to have an ignition lock on their vehicle after a DWI conviction. The state Inspector General's office says 43-year-old Sherri Freitas of Ravena is facing multiple felony and misdemeanor counts of tampering with computer and public records and official misconduct. Investigators say she changed computer records to make it appear the acquaintance wasn't required to have the lock-out device. They say she also sent the person's lawyer an official letter saying the device wasn't required, something wasn't authorized to do.

Freitas, who will be suspended, has worked 25 years at the DMV. She was arraigned Thursday in Albany. A phone listing couldn't be found for Freitas. [Read the full article in the Albany Times Union](#)

A Proposed Bill That May Increase CT Teen Driving Accidents and Fatalities (Connecticut)

Let us assume for a moment, that you are hailing a cab in New York City. A taxi cab pulls over. You notice that the driver appears to be a teenage boy. You ask this young man how long he has had his license. He excitedly tells you that he just got it yesterday. Would you then get into this cab with him? Most people probably would answer no. The reason being that they would not want to entrust their life in the hands of a driver who has just received his license. This quite naturally, makes perfect sense. In Connecticut, we have a graduated driver license statute that states that a newly licensed teen driver cannot drive with any passengers in his or her vehicle for six months unless that passenger is a parent, driving school instructor or someone at least 20 years of age (with conditions). The reason behind this requirement is that statistically, new drivers are shown to become involved in more accidents. As most of us know, teen driving accidents are the number one cause of death for this demographic. The law makes perfect sense and since its inception in 2008 the incidences of teen fatalities in Connecticut have been greatly reduced. This is a proud accomplishment for the many people who have worked hard at getting this set of laws enacted. So why, might one ask, has Senator Kevin Witkos of the 8th District, proposed bill number 104 which is entitled, "An Act Allowing Newly Licensed Motor Vehicle Operators to Transport Immediately Family Members to and from School"? The reason behind the proposed bill is to eliminate the restriction placed on newly licensed drivers to allow such drivers to transport immediate family members to and from school. [Read the full article in Ridgefield Patch.](#)

Push For Driver's Licenses for Massachusetts Immigrants

Massachusetts immigrant advocates are set to gather at the State House in Boston to ask lawmakers to back a bill that will allow all state residents to apply for a driver's license, regardless of their immigration status. Massachusetts law currently requires immigrants seeking a driver's license to prove that they are in the country legally. Immigrant advocates say changes will ensure that drivers on state roads are trained, licensed and insured. The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition has worked with two Democratic lawmakers to introduce the Safe Driving Bill to address the fact that unlicensed immigrants need to drive children to school and relatives to hospitals. [Read the full article in the Boston Herald.](#)

Cuomo Proposes Drivers License Suspension for Tax Delinquency (New York)

Gov. Andrew Cuomo wants New York to be able to suspend driver's licenses for people who owe more than \$10,000 in taxes. Cuomo in his budget proposal this week asked for suspension power in tax delinquency cases once administrative and judicial reviews are exhausted. Administration officials say there are about 9,000 New York taxpayers who owe more than \$10,000, and they estimate the law could prompt 40 percent of them to settle. The law is expected to boost tax receipts by \$26 million in its first year, though annual revenue is expected to drop after the initial bump. The license suspension could be lifted once there's an agreement to start paying back taxes. The tax delinquents could be granted a restricted license for work and school. [Read the full article on wnyt.com](#)

Region II News

Legislation Would Ban Texting While Driving in Oklahoma

Legislation filed by Oklahoma state Rep. Curtis McDaniel would ban texting while driving. The legislation, House Bill 1503, would outlaw texting while the driver's vehicle is in motion, but exempts texts to emergency response operators, medical providers, firefighters and law enforcement. The penalty would not exceed \$500. McDaniel spoke of bipartisan support for the bill. [Read the full story in the Insurance Journal.](#)

Mississippi Bill Would Not Recognize Speeding Tickets from 'Evil-eye' Cameras

Mississippi State House members declared the state Department of Public Safety will not recognize out-of-state traffic tickets issued by private companies operating "evil eye" cameras to catch speeding drivers and those running red lights. The legislation would recognize such tickets only when they come through regular channels by other states that are members of the Interstate Driver's License Compact. Supporters said five states - Tennessee, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan and Wisconsin - are not members of the interstate group. Sometimes, though, private companies operating what one member called "these evil eye cameras" submit ticket information to the state Department of Public Safety, which supporters said are overwhelming state safety employees. [Read the full story in the Commercial Appeal.](#)

Florida Man's License Restored as State Drops Fraud Allegation

Florida's Department of Motor Vehicles said on Tuesday it had lifted the suspension of a South Florida man's driving license after it accused him of fraud for adopting his wife's last name.

"It was a mistake on our part," Florida DMV spokesperson Kirsten Olsen-Doolan said. "The suspension will be lifted." The DMV stripped Boca Raton real estate investor Lazaro Dinh, 40, of his license in December after he changed his last name from Sopena to help his wife's Vietnamese family perpetuate their family surname. His wife, Hanh Dinh, 32, has four sisters and came to the United States in 1990, after a family odyssey involving living in refugee camps and being separated from her father for seven years. Lazaro Dinh was initially issued a new license with his wife's last name after presenting his 2011 marriage certificate at his local DMV office, just as newly married women are required to do when they adopt their husbands' names. More than a year later, he received a letter from Florida's DMV accusing him of "obtaining a driving license by fraud" and advising him that his license would be suspended. When he explained to the DMV that he was changing his name due to marriage, he was told "that only works for women," Dinh said. The suspension was upheld in an order issued on January 14 after a hearing in which Dinh produced his marriage certificate and a new U.S. passport with the updated name. Olsen-Doolan said the DMV had spoken to Dinh to let him know that his license had been mistakenly suspended and "either a man or a woman can change their name" on their driving license. "We are doing some training to make sure they understand that it can be done either way," she added. [Read the full story on Yahoo News.](#)

[TxDOT Considers Outsourcing IT](#)

The Texas Department of Transportation might transfer its information technology needs to private firms, the agency confirmed Thursday - signaling an interest in expanding its outsourcing of the agency's services. TxDOT Executive Director Phil Wilson sent an email to TxDOT employees Thursday notifying staff that the agency had requested proposals from private firms to improve the agencies' IT function. "Quite simply, we should always be looking at how to do things better," Wilson wrote in the email. "And that's exactly what we're doing with our IT program. The RFP published last week enables us to learn about how people outside of TxDOT could improve our IT function." TxDOT requested \$188 million for "information resources" in the Legislature's next two-year budget, including \$30 million for salaries and wages. [Read the full article in the Texas Tribune](#)

[Texas' Top Transportation Lawmakers Pick Vehicle Sales Tax as Preferred Way to Boost Highway Fund](#)

Texas' top transportation lawmakers have now made official their preferred method for infusing the Texas Department of Transportation's highway fund with much-needed cash. Robert Nichols and Larry Phillips - the chairmen of the state Senate and House transportation committees, respectively - jointly filed bills Monday to dedicate to TxDOT the 6.25 percent sales tax levied on new and used vehicle purchases. The proposal would allow the state to build up a large pool of money - up to \$3 billion a year, eventually - to pay off debt payments, boost TxDOT's maintenance budget and build roads, bridges, and other needed infrastructure projects. Nichols, R-Jacksonville, said in a news release that any long-term solution must be predictable, constitutionally dedicated, transportation-related, independent of fuel source and automatically adjusted for inflation. [Read the full article in the Dallas Morning News.](#)

[More Options to Serve Public \(Tennessee\)](#)

To better serve our customers, the Department of Safety and Homeland Security is making more options available for those who need to renew or replace their driver's licenses. And the department is helping citizens protect themselves by creating new safeguards to tackle identity theft. Tennesseans must renew driver licenses every five years. New photographs are required every 10 years. If you do not need a new photograph when it is time to renew, you can simply go to www.tn.gov/safety to renew online. You also can renew by mail. If it is time to renew with a new photograph on your license, or if you need a replacement license, we have several new options to make the process more convenient and faster. We are installing 40 self-service kiosks across the state, mostly in the urban areas, where you can renew or replace your license and pay for the transaction without ever speaking to a driver services examiner. These simple-to-use machines even take your photograph. Customers walk away with a temporary license that is valid for 20 days. The permanent license is mailed from a central location to the customer's home. We have placed most kiosks in alternate locations, such as local city halls, police precincts and even a public library. [Read the full article in the Tennessean.](#)

New NC DMV Commissioner Named (North Carolina)

A former official at the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles is returning to run the agency. James Forte was appointed Wednesday as the state's new DMV commissioner under Gov. Pat McCrory. Forte previously served as an assistant commissioner at DMV and as the legislative liaison for former State Auditor Les Merritt. Forte starts his job Wednesday at an annual salary of nearly \$111,000. [Read the full article on wnct.com.](#)

Need Your Title & Can't Find It? Fear No More! (Florida)

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you needed your vehicle or vessel title and couldn't find it? Previously, to obtain a duplicate paper title, you had to visit a tax collector's office and pay approximately \$75. Now, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles offers an easier, cheaper and safer way to handle your titles. DHSMV can hold your title electronically in an e-title. E-titles are motor vehicle, mobile home or vessel titles held in an electronic form by the Department. E-titles prove ownership of a motor vehicle, mobile home or vessel the same way a paper title does. An e-title also simplifies the communications between the vehicle owner, the lienholder and the agency. An e-title also reduces title fraud. "We're using the power of our system to make it more convenient for consumers to conduct their business and their lives," said DHSMV Executive Director Julie L. Jones. "E-titling eliminates paper and saves money, too." [Read the full article on wctv.com.](#)

Region III News

Illinois to Allow Illegal Immigrants to Get Licenses

Illinois is the fourth state to allow illegal immigrants to obtain a driver's license with a new law signed by Gov. Pat Quinn. Quinn and his supporters say the measure will make Illinois' roads safer and expand opportunities for illegal immigrants. Quinn says people need a way to get to work, drive to the doctor and drive their children to school. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel says

the new law should serve as a model for the nation. [Read the full story in the Statesman Journal.](#)

Missouri Senator Aims to Reduce Biennial Vehicle Inspection Requirements

Missouri State Sen. David Sater has introduced legislation that would create changes to the Missouri State Motor Vehicle Safety Inspection Program by requiring all motor vehicles to obtain a certificate of inspection triennially, instead of biennially. The Automotive Service Association (ASA) publicly opposed those changes, arguing that the bill's effect would create less-safe highways in Missouri. State government studies of vehicle safety inspection programs in Missouri and Pennsylvania have indicated that inspection programs deter accidents, injuries and deaths. [Read the full story at fenderbender.com.](#)

Power of Zero Program Goal: Zero Traffic Deaths in Milwaukee

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is kicking off its Power of Zero program in Milwaukee County. The goal of this effort is to reduce the number of preventable traffic deaths to zero in Wisconsin. Yaritza Mercado has seen frequent car crashes in her neighborhood. "I think that it's important for our community to come together as one and stop this. It happens a lot. I see it a lot in my community - car accidents all the time," Mercado said. "There's a tremendous amount of work to be done but this effort will prevent injuries, it will save lives and it will strengthen our communities," Wisconsin State Patrol Major Sandra Huxtable said. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, car crashes are the leading cause of death for Hispanics between 21 and 34, and the sixth leading cause of death for Hispanics of all ages. These sobering statistics prompted WisDOT to focus its effort in Hispanic communities. "I think the initiative is very important. It's good for the community to rise up and provide more leadership to ensure that we take safety precautions while we drive," Director of Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services Hector Colon said. [Read the full article on Fox6Now.com.](#)

Plan to Replace License Plates Blows a Flat (Ohio)

Put down the screwdriver. It looks like Ohio drivers can keep their license plates. The Ohio Department of Public Safety requested a budget item requiring drivers to replace their license plates every seven years for a fee of \$10, which would add up to an estimated \$5 million a year. But Rep. Rex Damschroder, chairman of the House Transportation, Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee, said public-safety officials told him the request will not become reality. Earlier this week, Joe Andrews, spokesman for the Public Safety Department, told The Dispatch he couldn't provide details on the request because it was a budget issue. Though Damschroder said he could not speak for Gov. John Kasich, who releases his biennial budget on Monday, the Medina Republican said the measure would have a lot of opposition if it ever made it to the House. "I can't see it passing," Damschroder said. "It's just not good public policy." According to the public-safety budget request, old license plates, faded or rusted with age, are hard for law enforcement to read. Requiring replacements would curb the problem. [Read the full article in the Columbus Dispatch.](#)

Michigan Lawmakers to Act to Keep Drunk Driving Limit at 0.08 Percent

A new law expanding Michigan's drunk driving laws to include prescription and non-prescription substances also changes the blood alcohol level for drinking and driving from 0.08 to a higher level of 0.10. But there's already a second piece of legislation in the works to keep the standard at 0.08 before October when the lower limit sunsets. "I'm sure we're not going to see any changes," said Kurt Weiss, spokesman for Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder. A higher drunk driving limit is opposed by the state administration, law enforcement and traffic safety advocates. [Read the full article in the Oakland Press](#)

Secretary of State: No Change Planned During Driver's License Policy Review

No changes are planned right now to a policy that denies Michigan driver's licenses to immigrants brought to the U.S. as young children by parents who entered illegally. That's despite a federal rules change that says they are in the country legally. Michigan is one of a handful of states that continues to deny driver's licenses to these young immigrants. Michigan Secretary of State Ruth Johnson's office said the state's policy is under review. [Read the full article on Michigan Radio](#).

Lawmakers to Weigh in on License Plate Readers (Minnesota)

They're on squad cars and street lights, and they track where you're driving. Across Minnesota, police and sheriffs have been using automated license plate readers for years to find stolen cars and aid investigations. Their spreading use and questions of data security, fueled by recent breaches of statewide databases, has focused attention on the lack of regulation. Until the data was temporarily classified late last year, anyone could ask police for a list of when and where a car had been spotted. Lawmakers will soon consider restrictions on the data stored via the readers, with Rep. Mary Liz Holberg, R-Lakeville, saying she plans to introduce a bill in the next few weeks. There's little question the Legislature will restrict public access to police's license plate databases. The bigger question will be: How long should police be able to keep tracking information on law-abiding Minnesotans? [Read the full article on Minnesota Public Radio](#)

St. Louis Sees Dramatic Spike in License Plate Theft

St. Louis police say license plate theft is on the rise, up 130% from this time last year. The department says in January 2012, the city had 49 license plate thefts. This January, approximately 113 plates have been stolen. Police say the popular crime used to be cutting the registration tab off the license plate. But in recent years, people have been advised to put the tab in the middle of the plate not on the edge, to make it more difficult for the thief. Now, the thief takes the entire plate. Because of the dramatic uptick in license plate theft, the police department is urging people to protect their vehicle. The department sells clear plate covers for \$5 and in a few weeks it's getting a shipment of 1,000 anti-theft fasteners. Sometime in February, you will be able to buy the fasteners for \$3. The fasteners are used instead of screws to mount the plate. [Read the full story on ksdk.com](#)

Region IV News

License Law Repeal Hits Roadblock (New Mexico)

Renewed efforts to repeal the New Mexico law that allows driver's licenses to be issued to illegal immigrants were stalled by a House committee late Tuesday. The House Labor and Human Resources Committee voted 5-4 to table the driver's license repeal outlined in House Bill 132, sponsored by Rep. Paul Pacheco, R-Albuquerque, and House Bill 161, sponsored by Rep. William Rehm, R-Albuquerque. The party-line vote came after the committee debated the bills for nearly four hours. The delay creates a new hurdle for HB 132, the repeal legislation backed by Gov. Susana Martinez, to move forward in the Legislature. No version of the driver's license repeal has been introduced in the Senate. [Read the full article at the Albuquerque Journal.](#)

[Oregon Legislature Bills Target Damage from Studded Tires](#)

Drivers who hit the icy roads during winter may turn to studded tires as one way to stay safe, but transportation officials flinch at the damage it does to Oregon's highways. The state spends more than \$11 million per year fixing roads and bridges damaged by studded tires, according to estimates by the Oregon Department of Transportation based off of a 2000 study. For more than a decade, lawmakers and residents have looked for ways to offset the cost of repairing these roads, including imposing new fees.

An initiative that would ban the use of studded tires failed to make the November 2012 ballot, but efforts to minimize the damage the tires do to roads are back in the Legislature.

[Read the full article at the Statesman Journal](#)

[House Panel Advances Short-term Driver's Licenses \(Alaska\)](#)

An Alaska House committee on Tuesday advanced a bill that would allow the state Department of Motor Vehicles to issue short-term drivers licenses to temporary residents. HB1, by Rep. Bob Lynn, R-Anchorage, would allow the department to issue licenses that expire as soon as a temporary resident's authorization to live in the U.S. has finished. "The way it is today, somebody with a visa - a visitor to the United States - that expires in two weeks can walk into the DMV and get a driver's license that doesn't expire for five years. This bill simply links the duration of the driver's license to the duration of the visa, or any other legal kind of document," Lynn said at a hearing of the House State Affairs Committee on Tuesday morning. [Read more in the San Francisco Chronicle.](#)

[DUI Bill Calls for Orange License Plates \(Montana\)](#)

Sponsored by House Representative Champ Edmund House Bill No. 276 seeks to revise DUI laws by forcing offenders to inherit orange licenses plates to identify themselves while driving. Some might compare a new DUI bill to the scarlet letter. It will brand your vehicle for five-years with orange licenses plates with the beginning letters DUI. The measure seeks to have every person convicted of a DUI to swap out their licenses plates so that you know who they are when you're on the road. Those in favor of the bill say people with DUI's need to be put on display so they can be embarrassed by their crime. But opponents say all the fees attached to a dui is enough stress for convicted drivers and displaying a scarlet letter is unnecessary. [Read the full story on kfbb.com](#)

[House Backs Missoula Lawmaker's Plan to Test Drivers for Pot Impairment \(Montana\)](#)

The Montana House is endorsing a plan to start testing drivers to determine possible marijuana impairment. The chamber backed House Bill 168 Tuesday in a 68-31 vote before sending it to the appropriations committee to analyze a price tag of about \$100,000 per year. Supporters say it will crack down on driving under the influence of marijuana. The bill establishes a legal standard of allowable amount of THC - an ingredient of marijuana - that can be in a person's blood. Republican sponsor Rep. Doc Moore of Missoula says the measure aims to make highways safer. He says many drunken driving crashes also involve marijuana use. Opponents argue that testing is unreliable and can measure agents that don't cause intoxication, but remain in the blood stream long after impairment. [Read the full story in the Missoulian.](#)

NM Driver's License Scam Brought Down by HSI Feds

An Albuquerque man who was part of an organized criminal ring that transported a minimum of 100 illegal immigrants from the Southeastern United States to New Mexico to fraudulently obtain New Mexico driver's licenses pleaded guilty to two federal charges last week in Charleston, South Carolina. Ivon Baray-Luna, 31, pleaded guilty to one count each of conspiracy, transferring false identification documents, and transporting illegal aliens last Friday. He is facing a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. A sentencing date has not been set for him. Baray-Luna and was part of a 30-member criminal operation that was involved in transporting illegal immigrants living in South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia and other states to New Mexico to fraudulently obtain New Mexico driver's licenses, according to the Homeland Security Investigations.

[Read the full story in the Deming Headlight.](#)

Proposed Bills Would Require DMV to be Open Saturdays, Change Furlough Days (Oregon)

Rep. Kevin Cameron, R-Salem, came in to talk with our editorial board this morning, as part of a panel of area legislators. The group chatted about a variety of topics, ranging from immigration to health care, before listing their personal priorities. (For more about the ed board meeting, see our Politics Watch Blog.) Cameron mentioned two bills that would impact state workers. House Bill 2411 would require DMV offices to be open during hours extended from the traditional work week. Cameron said that offices used to be open on Saturdays and closed Mondays so that people who worked all week could take care of business and high school students could take driving tests without missing school. This bill would require many DMV offices to return to that practice or offer other extended hours. [Read the full story in the Statesman Journal.](#)

House Committee Supports 'In God We Trust' License Plate Bill (Utah)

A bill to create a specialty license plate with the motto "In God We Trust" garnered strong support during its introduction to a legislative committee Tuesday. HB34 received favorable votes from all but one of the members of the House Transportation Committee. The proposed measure would authorize an "In God We Trust" special group license plate for programs that "support educational and community events that celebrate, teach or honor families, freedom, God and country." The idea for the plate came from 11-year-old Utah County resident Tate Christensen, who collects license plates with his father. After finding that several other states

already had plates with the motto, Christensen wanted to get one in Utah. [Read the full story in the Deseret News](#)

Did You Know...

- *February comes from the Latin word februum which means purification. In the old Roman calendar the purification ritual called Februa was held on February 15th.*
- *February is the second month of the year in the Gregorian calendar. It is the only month with twenty eight days. In leap year which occurs every four years, February has twenty nine days.*
- *The birthstone for February is amethyst which is purple quartz. Amethyst was a symbol of royalty in the Middle Ages. It also symbolizes clear-headedness and quick-wittedness.*
- *The flower for the month of February is the iris which is Greek for rainbow. The iris represents faith, wisdom and hope. An alternate flower for February is the violet. It represents faithfulness, modesty and virtue.*
- *The National Weather Service was established on February 9, 1870.*
- *The Boys Scouts of America were founded on February 8, 1910.*
- *Iwo Jima Day - U.S. Marines raised the flag on Mt. Suribachi (Battle of Iwo Jima) on February 23, 1945. To view the famous photograph and read more about it go to: <http://www.iwojima.com/>*