

Regional News – May 10, 2013

Tidbits

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2013 Standing Committee Vacancies

Each of AAMVA's three standing committees have vacancies beginning September 2013. If you are interested in applying for membership, please download the [Committee Member Application](#). Applications must be received by **August 1, 2013**. If you have questions, please contact Dianne Graham, director, Member & Conference Services via email dgraham@aamva.org or phone (703) 908-8267. For more information, see <http://www.aamva.org/Committees-and-Working-Groups/>.

Region I News

Connecticut Bill Would Report Chatty Drivers to Insurers

Frustrated by drivers who ignore Connecticut's ban on talking and texting on hand-held cellphones, some state legislators want insurance companies to know when their customers break the law. Lawmakers hope the prospect of higher insurance rates will finally encourage people to hang up and drive. [Read the full article in the Connecticut Post.](#)

MVA Launches Online Vision Screening Program for License Renewal (Maryland)

The state has launched a program to streamline the eye exam process for people over 40 who are renewing their driver's licenses. Ophthalmologists and optometrists who sign up for the free program can submit a patient's vision screening results online to the Motor Vehicle Administration. Eligible drivers can then renew their driver's licenses through the agency's website or self-service kiosk. Drivers who use an MVA office can use the vision certification to eliminate the vision screening step in the renewal process. [Read the full article in the Baltimore Sun.](#)

Bill Aims to Eliminate Double Dangers of Driving While Diabetic (New Jersey)

The symptoms of diabetic shock can be easily mistaken for intoxication, which can put diabetic drivers in a doubly life-threatening situation when behind the wheel. Police officers can unknowingly treat drivers as if they're breaking the law, rather than giving them the immediate attention they need. A bill advancing in the Legislature (A-945 and S-2405) is aimed at reducing the chance of that situation occurring, by allowing residents with diabetes to include a code on their driver's license indicating that they have the disease. [Read the full article on njspotlight.com.](#)

New York State Senate Passed Get-Tougher Bill on Serial Drunk Drivers

There are some people in New York State that have been convicted of drunk driving five to 10 times. But on each conviction, they only spend a few years in jail. Now there's a new proposal that would change that. There are two main things to know about this proposed law. The prison time could be significantly longer and it extends what prosecutors like to call, "the look-back period" from 10 years to 25 years.

Currently, if a person with a DWI conviction on their record gets a second DWI arrest in 10 years, it's a felony. The sentence could range from probation up to 7 years in prison. Under the new proposed law, if a person with that same DWI conviction gets a third DWI arrest in 25 years, it's a more serious felony with prison time up to 15 years. [Read the full article on whec.com.](#)

[New York Pitches "I Love NY Agriculture" Specialty License Plate](#)

New York Agriculture Commissioner Darrel J. Aubertine last week bought a new item for the pickup truck he drives around his farm in Cape Vincent. And, now he's encouraging others to buy it as well to help fund a state agricultural education program. The specialty license plate supports the New York Agriculture in the Classroom (NYAITS) program. NYAITS is a partnership of the New York Department of Agriculture and Markets, Cornell University, state Education Department, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and New York Farm Bureau. [Read the full article in the Mohawk Valley Business Journal.](#)

[NYC Man Accused of Possessing 20 Driver's Licenses \(New York\)](#)

A Brooklyn man is accused of possessing 20 driver's license from three states and 289 Social Security numbers. Emmanuel Egbunike was charged with unlawful possession of personal identification information and criminal possession of a forged instrument. Suffolk County police say he was arrested Thursday in Farmingdale, Long Island. [Read the full article in the Wall Street Journal.](#)

[Some Pennsylvania War Vets Offered 2 New License Plates](#)

There are two new license plates for certain Pennsylvania war veterans. Pennsylvanians who have served in any military airborne unit, or merchant marines who served in the second World War can choose from new military license plates. [Read the full article at CBS Philly.](#)

[Pennsylvania Legislation Could Infl8 Vanity Plate Cost](#)

If the Legislature approves the transportation funding bill now pending in the state Senate, the price of vanity license plates will S CA L8. The bill, sponsored by Sen. John Rafferty, R-Montgomery, would raise the one-time fee for personalized plates from the current \$20 to \$76. The same increase would apply to the hundreds of special organization plates that recognize various groups and institutions. [Read the full article in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.](#)

[Rhode Island Considers Driver's Licenses for Illegal Immigrants](#)

Lawmakers in Rhode Island are considering a proposal to allow immigrants to obtain driver's licenses regardless of their legal status. The Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on the legislation this week. [Read the full article in the Claims Journal.](#)

[Vermont Grants Driver's Licenses to Migrant Workers](#)

Vermont just became the sixth state to grant driver's licenses to migrant workers. The law would allow people to get driver's licenses and non-driver ID cards regardless of their legal status. They have to prove Vermont residency - and if it's a driver's license, take a road test. The license would look different than a regular license. It wouldn't comply with the Real ID act of 2005, which means you couldn't use it to board a plane, or to get into to a federal building. But you could use it to get off the farm. [Read the full article at North Country Public Radio.](#)

Region II News

[The Florida Highway Patrol Welcomes 59 New Troopers to Public Service](#)

The Florida Highway Patrol's 59 newest troopers from the 124th Basic Recruit Class graduated from the Florida Highway Patrol Academy this morning. Due to a new accelerated schedule, the 124th recruit

class was able to graduate five weeks earlier than previous academy classes thus ensuring the newly trained troopers are patrolling Florida roadways sooner. The academy trains recruits in all aspects of law enforcement including human relations, law, firearms, defensive tactics, vehicle operations and first aid. [Read the full release on flhsmv.gov.](#)

Louisiana Court Strikes Down Undocumented Immigrant Driving Law As Unconstitutional

A Louisiana court recently struck down a state law that makes it a felony for immigrants to drive without documents that demonstrate they are in the country legally, according to multiple reports and court documents. In a court opinion that cited the contributions made by "those who crossed oceans and deserts to come here," Louisiana Circuit Court Judge Sylvia Cooks wrote that the state of Louisiana "lacked the Constitutional authority" to enforce the law. Cooks' May 1 decision also noted the law is trumped by federal immigration legislation, rendering it further obsolete. [Read the full article in the Huffington Post.](#)

Oklahoma Senate Approves Fee Hike For Driver's Licenses

The cost of getting a driver's license in Oklahoma will go up by about \$12 under a bill making its way to Gov. Mary Fallin's desk. The Senate voted 30-15 on Monday to approve the bill that would increase the cost of issuing or renewing a standard driver's license from \$21.50 to \$33.50. The cost of various commercial drivers' licenses also is going up by \$10. The new rates will be effective Nov. 1. [Read the full article on newson6.com.](#)

Charlottesville Residents Charged with Selling Fake IDs to Thousands of College Students (Virginia)

Three Charlottesville residents were charged Tuesday with selling fake IDs to thousands of college students across the country. After a search of a home near the University of Virginia, federal authorities charged the three with mail fraud, wire fraud, and fraud and related activity in connection with identification documents. [Read the full article in the Washington Post.](#)

Region III News

Jesse White's Legislation Strengthening GDL Law Approved by Senate (Illinois)

Legislation proposed by Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White to prohibit the issuance of a driver's license to a driver under 18 that has an unresolved traffic citation was approved by Illinois State Senate. The legislation - named Kelsey's Law in honor of Kelsey Little - now moves to the governor's office for his approval. [Read the full release on cyberdriveillinois.com.](#)

Gov. Branstad Signs Changes for Iowa Drivers

Beginning and novice drivers will face more restrictions designed to improve safety on Iowa roadways under legislation signed into law by Gov. Terry Branstad on Wednesday. Senate File 115 extends from six months to one year the time that a teenager with a learner's permit will need to practice supervised driving with a parent or guardian in the car before he or she would receive a graduated driver's license. [Read the full article on kcrq.com.](#)

Iowa Supreme Court Approves Use Of Tinted License Plate Covers

Motorists can use a license frame with a tinted cover, the Iowa Supreme Court affirmed in an April 26 ruling. The court considered the case of Tommy Tyler Jr. whose white Cadillac Escalade was stopped at 2am on October 13, 2010 as it was driving along Merle Hay Road in Johnston. Officer Brad Lowe, who was waiting in the parking lot of Dragon Car Wash, recognized the Escalade that he had pulled over two days earlier over its plate cover. [Read the full article on thenewspaper.com.](#)

Modernization of Seatbelt Legislation Would Provide Greater Passenger Safety (Manitoba)

Under proposed amendments to the Highway Traffic Act, each passenger would be required to occupy a seat in a motor vehicle and use the seatbelt provided, and passengers in wheelchairs would also need to be secured with a seatbelt, Infrastructure and Transportation Minister Steve Ashton announced today.

[Read the full release at news.gov.mb.ca.](#)

Gov. Nixon Threatens Layoffs over DMV Budget Cuts (Missouri)

Gov. Jay Nixon has threatened to cut services and lay off government employees if lawmakers don't agree to fund the state's driver's licensing operation for the full fiscal year. On Tuesday, House and Senate budget negotiators in the Budget Conference Committee decided to fund two-thirds of the fiscal 2014 budget for the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the Department of Revenue's licensing arm, providing funds only for eight months rather than a full year. In addition, the committee cut one-third of the funding for the contract for printing and distribution of Missouri-issued driver's licenses.

[Read the full article in the St. Louis Business Journal.](#)

Missouri Vehicle Sale Taxes Would be Reinstated Under Legislation Already Vetoed Twice

Denied twice by gubernatorial vetoes, Missouri lawmakers are hoping for success on their third attempt to reinstate local taxes on cars, trucks and boats bought from out-of-state dealers or through person-to-person sales. Yet even if lawmakers finally get Gov. Jay Nixon's signature on the legislation, constitutional questions may remain about whether the state Legislature can impose a local tax and then require cities and counties to hold after-the-fact elections on whether that tax should remain.

[Read the full article in the Kansas City Star.](#)

Missouri Must Shift Gears on Commercial Driving Rules

Missouri lawmakers will have to put the pedal to the metal if they're to avoid losing \$30 million or more in federal transportation funds, KMBC reports. Legislators have two weeks left to pass a bill that puts the state's rules for commercial driver's licenses in line with federal mandates. The changes involve restrictions on texting and the use of mobile phones and rules for learner's permits.

[Read the full article in the Kansas City Business Journal.](#)

Nebraska DMV Beginning Online Handicap Permit Renewal

The Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles said it launched a free online service that allows drivers holding a valid handicap parking permit to request a second permit or a replacement permit online. The Handicap Parking Permit Public Access application can be accessed on the Nebraska DMV website at www.ClickDMV.ne.gov. The DMV receives an average of 160 requests monthly for replacement handicap parking permit placards.

[Read the full article on kearneyhub.com.](#)

Region IV News

Arizona Department of Public Safety Grieves Over The Loss of Officer Tim Huffman

On May 6, 2013, at around 5:10 p.m., three Arizona Department of Public Safety officers assigned to District 4 were investigating an injury collision on the eastbound lanes of Interstate 8 at milepost 40, about 40 miles east of Yuma. The fire department had requested that the officers close the number-two lane to allow the transport of the injured. A DPS Officer parked his patrol car with the emergency lights flashing, on the number-two lane. Officer Tim Huffman's patrol vehicle was parked a few feet away on the shoulder. Huffman was in his car writing a report on his MDC. Moments later an empty tanker truck was traveling eastbound in the number-two lane of I-8 heading toward the closure. Despite the flashing lights and the Officer's attempt to signal to the truck driver, the semi-truck struck the DPS Officer's

patrol vehicle in the number-two lane pushing it into Huffman's vehicle. The Officer was able to jump out of the way moments before the crash. The force of the impact killed Huffman who was still inside this vehicle. [Read the full release at azdps.gov.](#)

Privacy Groups File Lawsuit over License Plate Scanners (California)

Privacy rights groups on Monday filed a lawsuit against Los Angeles County's two major police departments after the agencies refused to turn over information collected by electronic license plate scanners, the suit claimed. The Los Angeles Police Department and county Sheriff's Department have made use of the plate-reading technology for several years. Typically mounted on patrol vehicles, the small cameras continuously scan license plates and check them against criminal databases in search of stolen cars and cars registered to known fugitives. [Read the full article in the Los Angeles Times.](#)

Colorado Lawmakers Approve Driver's Licenses for Illegal Immigrants

In one of their final acts before wrapping up the Colorado legislative session on Wednesday, lawmakers approved a bill allowing immigrants who are in the country illegally to obtain driver's licenses, making the state one of only a handful to have passed such a measure. [Read the full article in the New York Times.](#)

MSU Study Focuses on Young Drivers (Montana)

Researchers at Montana State University are looking at how to use driving simulators to better train young drivers, who are more likely to die in an automobile crash than by any other means. A study by MSU engineering researchers compares the responses of young drivers in the Western Transportation Institute's driving simulator with their reactions in an on-the-road vehicle. [Read the full article in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle.](#)

DMV Enhances Service for Online Users (Nevada)

Nevada's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has created a web portal called "MyDMV" that puts all of the most common DMV transactions in one place, making it more convenient for motorists to renew a driver's license, vehicle registration or ID card. For the first time, customers will be able to make a change of address online. [Read the full release at dmvnv.com.](#)

Nevada May Become First State to Officially Allow Motorcyclists to Split Traffic Lanes

Nevada could become the first state in the nation to allow motorcyclists to legally drive between two lanes of traffic. The maneuver, known as lane splitting, is currently illegal in 49 states. It has been unofficially permitted in California for decades, with no law specifically allowing or prohibiting the practice. An attempt to legalize it in Arizona was vetoed by Gov. Jan Brewer, a Republican, in 2010. [Read the full article on rgj.com.](#)

Nevada Bill Suggests Removing Part of Marijuana DUI Tests

Some Nevada lawmakers say medical marijuana patients shouldn't be deemed impaired when driving just because they have small amounts of marijuana in their system. The idea sparked intense debate Tuesday when Assembly Majority Leader William Horne, D-Las Vegas, presented AB351 to the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. [Read the full article on rgj.com.](#)

NDOT to Start Using Fatality Numbers to Promote Safe Driving (Nevada)

In the face of rising traffic fatalities statewide in 2012, the Nevada Department of Transportation will begin posting traffic fatality numbers on digital freeway boards as a reminder to motorists to drive safely, the department announced Monday. The reminders will be posted on freeway digital message

signs across the state. Each sign will periodically display updated traffic death numbers, NDOT said. [Read the full article on rgj.com.](#)

Jurors Deliberate in New Mexico Driver's License Case

The case of a man accused in a driver's license scam that involved Chinese foreign nationals who were in the U.S. illegally is in the hands of jurors. The jury began deliberations in the case of Gordon Leong, 24, on Friday. He's charged with 110 felony counts in connection with a scheme that involved securing New Mexico driver's licenses for more than 60 people. [Read the full article in the Connecticut Post.](#)

Digital Proof of Motor Insurance Bill Headed to Gov. John Kitzhaber (Oregon)

Oregon is on its way to allowing digital proof of motor insurance. House Bill 2107 sailed out of the Senate Monday. Sen. Bruce Starr, R-Hillsboro, gave a brief explanation on the floor, said "good bill, should pass" and it did. The vote was unanimous. [Read the full article in the Oregonian.](#)

Did You Know...

- *The Mother's Day we celebrate today was started by Anna Jarvis in the early 1900s. Jarvis got Congress to recognize the holiday, founded the Mother's Day International Association and even trademarked the phrase "Mother's Day." Jarvis was inspired by her own mother, who had called for "Mothers Work Days" to improve conditions for soldiers on both sides during the Civil War.*
- *Other countries celebrate their own versions of Mother's Day. The UK has Mothering Sunday, which dates back to the 16th century and is observed on the fourth Sunday after Lent; Japan has its celebration of the Empress Kojun's birthday, which has become just as commercialized as the American Mother's Day; and Spain and Portugal celebrate on December 8 by honoring both the Virgin Mary and their own moms.*
- *Mother's Day is the third most popular holiday in the world, second to only Christmas and Easter.*
- *According to the Pew Research Center, there are consistently more phone calls made on Mother's Day than any other day of the year.*
- *Florists might hawk huge Mother's Day bouquets with exotic blooms and designer names, but the traditional gift is a single, simple carnation.*
- *A research study decoded why moms love getting flowers so much. The study, conducted by Nancy Etcoff, Ph.D., of Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, concluded that flowers affect human behavior, making people feel more compassionate toward others and happier in general when fresh-cut blooms are around.*
- *About 80 percent of Mother's Day cards are purchased by women.*
- *Mother's Day usually rakes in \$2.6 billion on flowers, \$1.53 billion on gifts (generating 7.8 percent of annual revenue for the United States jewelry industry), and \$68 million on greeting cards.*