

Regional News – May 31, 2013

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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

Senate Approves Illegal Immigrant Driver's Licenses (Connecticut)

The state Senate approved legislation early Thursday that would allow immigrants to obtain driver's licenses regardless of their legal statuses. Immigrants would be able to obtain driver's licenses beginning in January 2015 in the bill, which passed 19-16 in the Senate. It passed the House of Representatives last week. [Read the full article on CBS Connecticut.](#)

Maryland's Hand-held Cellphone Ban to Get Stricter (Maryland)

Talking on a hand-held cellphone while driving is prohibited in Maryland, but in the fall, a change in the law will make police enforcement of the ban a little easier. Currently, the hand-held cellphone ban is a secondary offense, meaning that police have to stop the driver for another offense before a ticket can be issued for the cell phone infraction. But starting Oct. 1, the ban becomes a primary offense, meaning that police can pull over a driver they see using a hand-held phone, said Buel Young, spokesman for the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration. No other offense is needed. [Read the full article in the Daily Record.](#)

Data: Careless Driving a Factor in 37 Percent of Motorcycle Crashes (Maryland)

Inattentive driving is a leading cause of motorcycle crashes in the county, according to data from the Frederick County Sheriff's Office. Motorcycles were involved in 196 reported crashes throughout the county between January 2008 and May 21, 2013. Failure to pay attention was listed as a factor in 37 percent of those crashes. [Read the full article in the Frederick News-Post](#)

Senate Kills House's 12-Cent Gas Tax Increase (New Hampshire)

A bipartisan majority of the state Senate yesterday rejected the idea of increasing New Hampshire's gas tax, killing a 12-cent increase passed by the House with a parliamentary maneuver that also takes the issue off the table during budget negotiations next month with the House. The 18-6 vote to "indefinitely postpone" a vote on the gas tax bill came a day after the House voted, 199-164, to kill a Senate bill that would have allowed a single casino in the state. Both expanded gambling and the gas tax had been touted as sources of revenue for improving the state's roads and bridges. [Read the full article in the Concord Monitor](#)

DMV Urges Caution When Buying Flood Cars (New York)

Governor Andrew Cuomo issued a consumer alert Tuesday cautioning New Yorkers against buying cars damaged by Superstorm Sandy. There are approximately 400,000 vehicles that were flooded as a result of Sandy. The Department of Motor Vehicles is being notified by insurance companies so they can prevent flood-damaged vehicles from being re-titled or re-registered. The DMV's Chief Investigator, Owen McShane says that the cars look fine, but warns there could be electrical problems. [Read the full article a wicz.com](#)

Motorcycle Crash Deaths up Since Helmet Law Repeal (Pennsylvania)

Since Pennsylvania lawmakers decided a decade ago to give motorcyclists the choice of whether to wear helmets or not, the number of deaths in motorcycle crashes has increased. The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review (<http://bit.ly/18jHFne>) says that since 2003, the number of deaths in motorcycle crashes is up 35 percent. [Read the full article on Phillyburbs.com](#)

Lawmakers Pass Distracted Driving Bill (Rhode Island)

State lawmakers have passed a bill requiring Rhode Island driving students to be educated and tested on distracted driving. The bill now heads to Governor Lincoln Chafee's desk for final approval. [Read the full article on wpri.com](#)

Region II News

Fast Enterprises Implements New Driver Services System for Arkansas

Government software and consulting services provider Fast Enterprises, LLC (FAST) has announced the successful delivery of a new driver services system for the state of Arkansas-the first new driver services system to go live for a U.S. state since 2008. [Read the full article on EON](#)

Florida Governor Scott Aigns Ban on Texting While Driving

Gov. Rick Scott signed a statewide ban on texting while driving into law today, making Florida the 41st state to enact a texting-while-driving ban for all drivers. The law makes it a secondary offense to read or send a text, email or instant message on a smartphone while driving. That means police have to first stop drivers for another offense like an illegal turn. Florida's seatbelt law also began as a secondary offense but is now a primary offense. [Read the full article in the Pensacola News Journal](#)

Cajun License Plate Approved (Louisiana)

Both the House and Senate have agreed to create new specialized license plates declaring "I'm Cajun ... and proud" or "I'm a Creole ... and proud." The plates would cost \$15 a year, on top of any other standard charges, with the dollars slated to pay for scholarships from the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana. [Read the full article in the Daily Comet](#)

Virginia DMV Streamlines Driver Testing

Starting this July, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles is making a major change: It's overhauling and centralizing its knowledge automated testing (KAT) system, which handles all driver's license testing in the state. [Read the full article in Government Technology](#)

Region III News

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

Legislation proposed by Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White to further improve Illinois' heralded Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program was approved by the Illinois General Assembly. House Bill 772 - which now goes to the governor's office for his approval - will require people ages 18-20 who skip driver education to complete a 6-hour driver training and education course before applying for a driver's license. [Read the full article in the Morton Times News](#)

Fuel Tax Increase Dies in Iowa Legislature

Lawmakers closed the 2013 session this week without any movement on a fuel tax increase, leaving the state's road repair backlog one of the few high-priority items left unsolved. The punt practically ensures some form of a fuel tax proposal will come back in 2014, just as lawmakers enter the home stretch for their re-election campaigns. [Read the full article in the Quad-City Times](#)

Motorcycle Injuries in Michigan Worsen with Weaker Helmet Law

The average medical claim from a motorcycle crash rose by more than one-fifth last year in Michigan after the state stopped requiring all riders to wear helmets, according to an insurance industry study. Across the nation, motorcyclists opposed to mandatory helmet use have been chipping away at state helmet laws for years while crash deaths have been on the rise. [Read the full article in the Detroit Free Press](#)

Missouri License and Registration Fees Could Increase

Missouri residents renewing their drivers' licenses or registering motor vehicles could pay more under a bill awaiting the governor's approval. Current law allows local fee offices to charge \$2.50 for licenses that expire in three years and \$5 for a 10-year license. But a measure passed by lawmakers this month - SB51 - would double those charges. [Read the full story in the Kansas City Star](#)

Justice Insider: State Troopers Show off Cruisers in Video (Ohio)

The State Highway Patrol has a film of its own, detailing how the agency turns a plain, old Dodge Charger into a state-of-the-art cruiser. In the first episode of a new Web series, Behind the Flying Wheel, the patrol walks viewers down its assembly line and through the Charger's transformation, from decals to light bars to the installation of the prisoner partition. [Read the full story in the Columbus Dispatch](#)

Training Aims to Get Ohio Crashes Cleared Quickly

Ohio is using a federal program to teach thousands of police, firefighters, tow-truck operators and other emergency responders to clear highway crash scenes more safely and efficiently. The Federal Highway Administration trained instructors in Ohio who are teaching other responders to improve coordination at crash scenes and get wrecked or disabled vehicles out of the way of traffic more quickly. That's meant to reduce roadway blockages and the potential for secondary crashes and injuries. [Read the full article on wtrf.com](#)

Lawmaker Proposes Legislation To Deny Driver's Licenses For Unauthorized Immigrants (Ohio)

Republican State Rep. Matt Lynch said residents who are in Ohio illegally should not be eligible for a driver's license. Lynch is sponsoring legislation aimed at participants of an Obama administration program that grants temporary amnesty to young undocumented immigrants. [Read the full article on nbc4i.com](#)

Region IV News

Undocumented Immigrants Could Apply for California Driver's Licenses if Bill Becomes Law

More immigrants living in the U.S. illegally would be able to obtain a California driver's license under a bill that is moving through the state Legislature. A measure from Democratic Assemblyman Luis Alejo, of Watsonville, would allow people without a Social Security number to apply for a license. They must show several alternative forms of identification, including a birth certificate and proof of residency. Unauthorized immigrants seeking a license also must pass a driving test like other applicants. [Read the full article in the Los Angeles Daily News.](#)

Unique Motorcycle Safety Device Aims to Reduce Rear-end Collisions (California)

Look ma, no brakes. But slow down anyway! California startup Vectolabs has developed a new type of safety light for motorcycles that illuminates when the bike slows down, regardless of whether or not the rider is using the brakes. [Read the full article on foxnews.com](#)

California Bill Allows Snoopy License Plate to Fund Museums

The state Assembly has passed a bill that would help establish a Snoopy license plate to benefit California museums. Lawmakers passed AB482 by Democratic Assemblywoman Toni Atkins of San Diego on a 54-19 vote Thursday. The bill allows the California Cultural and Historical Endowment to create a new grant program for museums using revenue from a specialized license plate. The endowment would also be transferred from the California State Library to the Natural Resources Agency. [Read the full article in the Silicon Valley Mercury News](#)

Nevada Assembly Approves Driver Privilege Cards

The Nevada Assembly gave final legislative approval late Monday to a bill establishing driver privilege cards for people in the country illegally. SB303 was approved on a 30-9 vote and now heads to Republican Gov. Brian Sandoval, who is expected to sign it. [Read the full article in the San Francisco Chronicle](#)

DMV Employee Accused of Providing Confidential Information for Crimes (Utah)

A Utah Division of Motor Vehicles employee has been fired over allegations she provided private information acquired at work for the commission of crimes. [Read the full story in the Deseret News.](#)

Bill Would Limit Permits on Oversized Trucks (Washington)

A week after the Interstate 5 Skagit River Bridge collapse, the first bill has hit the Legislature to restrict where overheight trucks may go. Senate Bill 5944, introduced Thursday by state Sen. Michael Baumgartner, R-Spokane, would deny travel permits to a load higher or wider than the minimum clearance on its route. [Read the full article in the Seattle Times.](#)

Did You Know...

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- *In the Northern hemisphere, the beginning of the meteorological summer is 1 June. In the Southern hemisphere, the beginning of the meteorological winter is 1 June.*
- *At the start of June, the sun rises in the constellation of Taurus; at the end of June, the sun rises in the constellation of Gemini. However, due to the precession of the equinoxes, June begins with the sun in the astrological sign of Gemini, and ends with the sun in the astrological sign of Cancer.*
- *June is known for the large number of marriages that occur over the course of the month. According to one etymology, June is named after Juno (Hera). Juno was the goddess of marriage and a married couple's household, so some consider it good luck to be married in this month.*
- *According to another etymology provided by the Roman poet Ovid, June is named for the iuniores, latin for "young people" (Fasti VI.88) and that the month of May is named for the maiores, Latin for "elders".*

In Iceland, folklore says that if you bathe naked in the morning dew on the morning of June 24, you are supposed to keep aging at bay for longer.