

## Regional News – July 19, 2013

### Check out the TWIRcast!

Head over to the [Media Center at AAMVA.org](http://www.aamva.org) or [AAMVA's YouTube channel](#) to get the latest in news and events affecting the AAMVA community, in our our brand new [TWIRcast](#):



### Region I Conference Wraps Up

The Region I Conference wrapped up in Dover, DE, Thursday morning and conference attendees said their final farewells at the getaway breakfast. Thanks to the attendees and sponsors for the great sessions and networking opportunities. A special thanks to the Region I conference staff for pulling it all together. Don't forget that even if you weren't able to attend the conference, or if you just want to relive the experience...the presentations from the sessions are available in the [Region I Conference Downloads Center](#) on AAMVA's Web site.

### Registration is Open for the 2013 Annual International Conference

Registration for AAMVA's 2013 Annual International Conference (AIC) is now open and we are excited to offer an online registration process. No more paper registration forms! Once you click [Register Now](#), you will be prompted to login. If you have not logged into AAMVA before, you will have to create a "My AAMVA" user profile. To create this profile and receive AAMVA log in credentials, follow the instructions in [this document](#).

### Regional Conference Presentations are Available Online

The 2013 Regional conferences have come and gone, but you can still catch the presentations online. Visit the Presentations from Past Events page on AAMVA's Web site at <http://www.aamva.org/Presentations-from-Past-Events/>.

### Region IV Looking for Committee Volunteers

Region IV is looking for Vice-Chairs for four (4) committees - Information Technology, Driver Licensing & Financial Responsibility, Law Enforcement and Vehicle, Registration and Title. Responsibilities include working with the Chair and Regional Director to plan the agenda for the annual regional conference. The Region covers travel costs for Chairs and Vice-Chairs to attend the Regional. Terms are two (2) to three (3) years with an expectation to move to Chair for an additional two (2) to three (3) years. Volunteering for a Regional Committee provides great networking opportunities. Contact Sheila Prior at [sprior@aamva.org](mailto:sprior@aamva.org) or 480-275-4584 to learn more or to volunteer.

## Region I News

**Texting, Phoning When Driving - Even When Stopped - To Cost More (Connecticut)**

With little fanfare, Gov. Dannel P. Malloy recently signed into law two measures that aim to crack down on distracted driving by placing new restrictions on the use of cellphones and other electronic devices. One new law, signed by the governor last week, will increase the fines for texting and talking while driving and, for the first time, creates a point system that will allow insurance companies to take distracted driving violations into account when setting rates. A second law will make it illegal to use a handheld device behind the wheel, even if the vehicle is sitting motionless at a signal or in traffic. Under current law, the motorist must be driving for a violation to occur. Both of the new restrictions take effect on Oct. 1. Taken together, they put Connecticut firmly in step with a national movement toward tougher rules on the use of electronics while driving. [Read the full article in The Courant.](#)

### **Maryland Launches Safety Effort to Curb Car-on-Truck Aggression**

State and federal transportation and law enforcement officials have begun a summer initiative as part of the Smooth Operator program aimed at motorists who tailgate, speed and cut off big commercial vehicles. More than 50 law enforcement agencies across the state will be part of the campaign, which also will include billboards and social media. [Read the full story in The Baltimore Sun.](#)

### **Budget Battle Steers Towards Gas Hike (Massachusetts)**

Democrats will do battle over whether to raise the gas tax this week at the State House as Gov. Deval Patrick and the Legislature butt heads over the budget - again. As MBTA advocates and town leaders decried the impending cuts, Patrick said he couldn't approve the legislators' unbalanced budget, because it relied on \$500 million from a transportation financing bill he had previously rejected. He instead insisted on a gas tax increase of up to 5 cents a gallon to make up for cutbacks in Pike tolls. [Read the full story in the Boston Herald.](#)

### **NY Begins Distracted Driving Crackdown... with Special Trooper Patrols**

New York State Police will use special undercover SUVs to catch distracted drivers as part of a summer crackdown starting this July 4th holiday weekend. The usual drunk driving checkpoints will be in place, but State Police Superintendent Joseph D'Amico says undercover patrols -- in higher vehicles -- are an effective tool for catching drivers who might be using a cell phone to text or email low down in their lap. [Read the full article on WNYC.ORG.](#)

### **Anti-abortion Plates Get Green Light in Rhode Island**

License plates have been used to proclaim environmental concern, support research into cancer and other diseases, and support championship sports teams. But now Rhode Island, the Ocean State, has waded into treacherous waters by allowing motorists to obtain a "Choose Life" license plate to support CareNet Pregnancy Center of RI, an anti-abortion group. The House and Senate passed a hastily packaged bill in the waning hours of this year's General Assembly session, with half of the \$40 surcharge for the plate to benefit an organization that describes itself as a "faith-based nonprofit organization that exists to serve women and men facing unplanned pregnancies." [Read the full article on theday.com.](#)

## **Region II News**

### **Florida Governor Vetoes Driver's Licenses for DREAMers Despite Strong Bipartisan Support**

Republican Governor Rick Scott of Florida has vetoed a measure that would have allowed young undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. The bill was passed nearly unanimously by the Florida legislature, with only two Republicans opposing the measure. It would have given immigrants eligible for President Obama's deportation deferment program the ability to apply for a temporary driver's license. Last year, Obama enacted a program that allows undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as minors to stay in the country as long as they stay in school and avoid criminal activity. [Read the full article in the Latin Post.](#)

### **[Driver Services Commissioner Announces Improved Online Address Change \(Georgia\)](#)**

Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS) Commissioner Rob Mikell announced today that recent improvements to the agency's online address change program has increased participation - saving thousands of customers an unnecessary visit to their local driver licensing office. [Read the press release for more details.](#)

### **[Immigration Bill Delayed in North Carolina House](#)**

Some provisions in an immigration bill poised for debate in the North Carolina House may now only be studied rather than carried out if it's approved. The House delayed Monday evening debate on the "Reclaim NC" Act and rescheduled it for Tuesday. The measure would give driving privileges to some immigrants living in the country illegally while increasing punishments for people who possess or sell fraudulent identification cards. Bill sponsor Rep. Harry Warren of Salisbury says he now plans to amend the bill to simply studying the driver's license expansion. Warren says the Department of Transportation is concerned because the license requirement would take effect in October. The legislation also would give police authority to detain anyone suspected of lacking documentation for up to 24 hours to verify legal status. [Read the full article on sfgate.com.](#)

### **[An E-Ink License Plate That Tells The World \(And The Cops\) You're Uninsured \(South Carolina\)](#)**

The Department of Motor Vehicles doesn't have a reputation for being a hotbed of innovation. But nothing under its control is as stagnant as the license plate. Former DMV computer system architect Brian Bannister and former South Carolina DMV administrator David Findlay are seeking to change that, with a trackable, electronic display that could alert the authorities when a car is stolen or uninsured. Instead of running plate numbers in computer systems and peering at stickers, the license plate itself would make a car's status clear, with, for instance, the word "UNINSURED" in big red letters. [Read the full article on fastcoexist.com.](#)

### **[Tennessee Warns of Driver's License Phone Scam](#)**

The Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security is warning residents about a phone scam involving driver's licenses. Several citizens in west Tennessee have reported receiving phone calls regarding an issue with their 2012-2013 driver's license renewals, and then the caller requests the person's Social Security number. [Read the full story at KNOX News.](#)

### **[Wait Times at DMV Continue to Fall \(Tennessee\)](#)**

The Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security this week announced that the average wait time at state driver services centers has decreased so far this year compared to 2012. The average wait

time from Jan. 1 - June 30 at centers statewide, excluding reinstatement centers, fell from 34 minutes in 2012 to 31.5 minutes in 2013. [Read the full story in The Murfreesboro Post.](#)

## Region III News

### **New placards aim to beat disability parking cheats (Illinois)**

The design - a yellow-and-gray-striped placard with a disability insignia - has been unveiled. The applications - about 55,000 a week - are being sent out. And based on the number turned in so far, state officials are hopeful a new disability-parking placard that's being rolled out will do what Illinois lawmakers wanted: Drastically reduce the number of people who qualify to park for free at meters - and, as a result, cut down on the number of able-bodied cheaters who use disability-parking placards or license plates to avoid paying to park. [Read the full article in the Chicago Sun Times.](#)

### **Missouri Experiences Significant Reduction In Traffic Deaths**

In spite of the high number of fatalities over the deadly July Fourth 2013 holiday, the year-to-date statewide statistics are lower than last year. The Missouri State Highway Patrol is pleased to announce Missouri has experienced a 16 percent decrease in fatalities this year compared to 2012. [Read the full press release.](#)

### **Drunk Driving Hotline to Help Law Enforcement Track Down Reckless Drivers (Nebraska)**

Over the holiday weekend, many Nebraska drivers encountered electronic road signs on the highways and interstates. The road signs were flashing a message: "Report Drunk Drivers Immediately. Dial \*55." It's as simple as dialing 911, but \*55 has one purpose-- to help law enforcement catch drunk drivers. When you dial \*55, you're actually calling the Nebraska State Patrol dispatch center. Once you're connected, dispatchers will get you in contact with local law enforcement. [Read the full article on 1011.com.](#)

## Region IV News

### **Judge Upholds Arizona Law Denying Drivers Licenses to Immigrants Eligible for DREAM Act**

Arizona's refusal to issue driver's licenses to DREAMers will continue to stand pending a constitutional challenge, a federal judge ruled today. Last year, the Obama administration implemented a deportation deferral program, which prevented young undocumented immigrants with no criminal records from being sent back to their countries of origin. This was in lieu of the DREAM Act, which would have provided a path to citizenship for those same people but never passed in Congress amid Republican objections. Now the DREAM Act may be unnecessary, as the people it helps are included in the bipartisan immigration reform bill currently being debated by the Senate Judiciary Committee. But in response to the administration's deportation deferral program, Arizona implemented rigorous new restrictions prevented any undocumented immigrants from receiving state-issued driver's licenses, a move seen by opponents solely as punishment, as previously immigration status was not considered by the state DMV when issuing licenses. [Read the full article in the Latin Post.](#)

### **Arizona Seeks Responses for Facial Recognition Software System**

The Arizona Department of Transportation is requesting responses for Facial Recognition Software System. Specific requirements for this solicitation are contained in **ADOT14-00003200**. The solicitation may be obtained from the State of Arizona's online procurement system, ProcureAZ:

<https://procure.az.gov/bsa/>. All responses are submitted via ProcureAZ and registration in ProcureAZ is required to submit a response. **Responses are due at 3:00 P.M. MST on August 15, 2013.** A Pre-Offer Conference will be held on Thursday, August 1, 2013 at 10:00 A.M. MST at the ADOT Auditorium located at 206 South 17th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85007. **POTENTIAL OFFERORS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND.**

### **Privacy Group Warns Against California Plan for Digital License Plates**

California license plates could get a high-tech makeover with a digital screen and wireless capabilities as part of a Senate bill making its way through the Legislature. Senate Bill 806 authorizes the Department of Motor Vehicles to create a pilot program at no cost to the state with as many as 160,000 cars testing the digital plates patented by San Francisco-based Smart Plate Mobile. The state hopes the technology will improve efficiencies in vehicle registrations and potentially save the DMV some of the \$20 million spent each year in postage for renewals. Privacy advocates say the approach could leave motorists vulnerable to government surveillance by undoing a Supreme Court ruling that required authorities to obtain search warrants before using vehicle tracking devices. [Read the full story in the Sacramento Bee.](#)

### **Titling Process Set to Change for Colorado DMV**

The Department of Motor Vehicles is in the process of implementing several changes that could have major impacts to vehicle owners. Car dealers and lenders will soon have the option to send their title information electronically to the DMV due to a recent bill that was passed in Colorado.

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

### **Commercial Drivers Need to Ensure that ITD has Current Information (Idaho)**

New federal regulations and Idaho law require that all drivers who hold a commercial driver license (CDL) or commercial learner permit (CLP) notify the Idaho Transportation Department of their current driving category. Idaho commercial drivers who fail to notify the transportation department of their driving category will eventually have their license downgraded to operate non-commercial vehicles only, said Ed Pemble with ITD. [Read the full story in the Independent Enterprise.](#)

### **DMV warns of web scam; Third party websites charging for "registration guide" (Nevada)**

The Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has received a number of calls and emails from Nevada residents who thought they were renewing their vehicle registration on the state's website only to find out too late they were on a private site that charged them for basic information. DMV's official website address is [www.dmvnv.com](http://www.dmvnv.com) and offers information about licensing, registration, titling, vehicle insurance and more. Motorists should ensure the address bar says dmvnv.com.

### **Oregon becomes first state to approve road user fee**

Oregon's legislature has become the first nationwide to approve a voluntary road user fee for drivers of vehicles weighing less than 10,000 pounds. Democrat Gov. John Kitzhaber reportedly is expected to sign the legislation that will charge participants 1.5 cents per mile instead of the state's gas tax of 30 cents per gallon. On July 7, the Senate voted 24-6 in favor of the bill to establish the program after the House approved it by a 43-13 vote. Participation will be limited to 5,000 vehicles whose drivers may apply for a

refund of gas tax they pay at the pump. State officials will stipulate what technology will be used to report mileage. The bill, SB 810, will provide \$2.8 million to implement the program, which is to be fully operative in 2015. [Read the full article on CCJDigital.com.](#)

### **Saskatchewan Discontinues Issuance of Registration Stickers**

Since Nov. 1, 2012, SGI, the administrator for vehicle registration in Saskatchewan, no longer issues licence plate stickers/tags. By eliminating sticker/tags, SGI is making it even simpler to renew licence plates. SGI ensures all motorists receive registration renewal reminders by letter or email and offers easy and convenient registration renewals at any motor licence issuing office, online through MYSGI, by phone, or by mail. Blank sticker/tags are being issued to cover the existing stickers/tags.

### **Five Plead Guilty in Commercial Driver's License Scheme (Washington)**

More than five years after they were arrested, five of six suspects pleaded guilty Thursday to a Spokane-based scheme that allowed Bosnian nationals to fraudulently obtain Washington state commercial driver's licenses. At the time of the arrests in January 2008, federal authorities said an estimated 100 individuals - most of them Bosnian immigrants - each paid \$2,500 to a commercial driving school operated by Brano Milovanovic and Tony G. Lamb, both of Spokane. [Read the full story in the Spokesman Review.](#)

### **Gov. Inslee Signs Measure to Toughen State's DUI Law (Washington)**

Joined by family members of victims, the governor signed a measure on Thursday toughening impaired driving laws in Washington after a spate of fatal crashes. Gov. Jay Inslee said the state was taking an important step in strengthening laws to protect people. Under the new law, a driver suspected of a second impaired driving offense faces mandatory arrest and will have an interlock device installed on their vehicle within five days of being charged. The state also will begin a pilot program in as many as three counties and two cities not in those counties to conduct daily alcohol monitoring of anyone convicted twice under the DUI law. Additional money will be put toward ensuring that local jurisdictions prosecute and punish more offenders more quickly. [Read the full article on KLEWTV.com.](#)

### **Yakima Tests Little-Used Law to Stem Drunken Driving (Washington)**

You've heard of drug forfeitures. How about DUI forfeitures? On a recent morning, a team of Yakima police officers and a city attorney armed with legal papers pulled up in front of a home a block from Fruitvale Boulevard, blocking in a 1997 GMC Suburban in the process. The officers were there to take the Suburban, which belonged to a 28-year-old woman now serving a 75-day jail sentence for her second drunken-driving conviction in barely two years. The seizure is more technically a forfeiture and applies only to motorists convicted of driving drunk two or more times in a seven-year period. It also applies only to the vehicle they were driving, and then only if they own it. [Read the full story in the Seattle Times.](#)

## **Other News**

### **New Report Finds States Stepping Up Efforts to Combat Distracted Driving**

With 50 percent of the U.S. adult population now owning smartphones and the wireless industry reporting a subscription penetration rate of 102.2 percent, today the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) released its second look at how states are dealing with the problem of distracted driving. The report, "2013 Distracted Driving: Survey of the States," reveals that since 2010 more states are enacting and enforcing laws, leveraging new media to educate the motoring public, focusing on key constituency groups, and collecting data related to the problem. [Read GHSA's press release for more.](#)

## Majority of Americans Say They Would Support Gas Tax Increase, with Conditions, Survey Results Show

A report highlighting the findings from a national survey on tax options to support transportation infrastructure was released by the Mineta Transportation Institute this week, suggesting that a majority of Americans might support a gas tax increase with certain conditions.

The 110-page report [is available here](#). [Read the full story in the AASHTO Journal](#).

## New Mobile App Could Reduce Distracted Driving

Distracted driving cost 3,300 lives in 2011, one of the top reported distractions is cell phone use. But there's a new mobile app to help keep your eyes on the road and off the phone. It's called OFF Mode and mobile app creator Nick Bovis hopes it will drastically decrease the 387,000 distracted driving-related accidents reported in 2011. When put in off mode, all calls, text messages and e-mails are blocked from the screen. Users still receive incoming messages, but without the distracting notifications. The app sends automated "I'm unavailable or busy" responses to those trying to reach them. [Learn more on FOX 2 News at 9](#).

## NHTSA Vows Aggressive Stance on Vehicle Recalls

Despite the government's truce with Chrysler Group L.L.C. over the safety of aged Jeep vehicles, the nation's top auto safety regulator said his agency will keep taking an expansive view of what justifies a safety recall. To avoid recalls, auto makers must stay "within the zone of reasonable risk," David Strickland, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), told Automotive News last week. That means not only adhering to federal safety standards at the time vehicles are built but also keeping up with the state of the art in design and technology among competitors. [Read the full article on TireBusiness.com](#).

## Did You Know...

*Did you know...*

- *If you yelled for 8 years, 7 months and 6 days, you would have produced enough sound energy to heat one cup of coffee.*
- *The strongest muscle in proportion to its size in the human body is the tongue.*
- *Every time you lick a stamp, you're consuming 1/10 of a calorie.*
- *The human heart creates enough pressure when it pumps out to the body to squirt blood 30 feet.*
- *Banging your head against a wall uses 150 calories an hour.*
- *The ant can lift 50 times its own weight, can pull 30 times its own weight and always falls over on its right side when intoxicated.*
- *A cockroach will live nine days without its head, before it starves to death.*
- *Butterflies taste with their feet.*
- *Elephants are the only mammals that can't jump.*
- *A duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why.*
- *An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.*
- *The longest recorded flight of a chicken is thirteen seconds.*

*The fingerprints of koala bears are virtually indistinguishable from those of humans, so much so that they could be confused at a crime scene.*