

February 27, 2015 - Regional News

AAMVA News

AAMVA Members--Lend Us Your Expertise!

Serving on a committee is an ideal way to influence policy, develop best practices and network with your peers. AAMVA is looking for jurisdiction members to lend us their expertise by filling several vacancies on our three standing committees. Details on the vacant positions are available on AAMVA's Web site at <http://www.aamva.org/Committees-and-Working-Groups/#CommitteeOpportunities>. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please complete the Committee Member Application Form <http://www.aamva.org/uploadedFiles/MainSite/Content/MembersLeaders/CommitteesDisciplines/Committee-Working%20Group%20Application.doc>. **All applications must be received by May 4, 2015.** (If you have previously submitted an application, you do not need to reapply provided your information is up to date.) If you have questions, please contact Dianne Graham, director, Member & Conference Services via email dgraham@aamva.org or phone (703) 908-8267.

2015 CDL Coordinators/IT Managers Meeting Presentations Available for Download

Presentations from the 2015 CDL Coordinators/IT meeting in Charlotte, NC, are now available for download for AAMVA jurisdiction and federal government members. Visit <http://www.aamva.org/2015-CDL-IT-Coordinators-Mtg-Presentations/>

2015 Workshop and Law Institute Just a Few Weeks Away



The 2015 Workshop and Law Institute www.aamva.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=5924 is right around the corner—March 18-19, in Fort Worth, Texas. One look at the program <http://www.aamva.org/EventsEducation/EventMaterials/2015/2015-Workshop-and-Law-Institute/2015-Workshop-and-Law-Institute-Program/>, and you'll know this event is one that you won't want to miss. Register online today! <https://www.aamva.org/profile/ListAllEventRegistrations.aspx>

Region I

Maine License Plates Have Connecticut Seeing Red

A few months ago, a veteran police officer in Windsor, Connecticut, noticed something strange on the streets of his community — a lot of cars with Maine plates. What he discovered was a scheme by Connecticut drivers to avoid paying local property taxes by registering their vehicles in Maine through the state's online system. Read the full story at SunJournal.com.

<http://www.sunjournal.com/news/maine/2015/02/23/maine-license-plates-have-connecticut-seeing-red/1659214>

Proposed Maryland Law Pushes for Transparency in Auto Safety Issues

One of the biggest flaws of the automobile industry is the veil of secrecy related to the problems with cars. Just last week, Takata, the maker of faulty air bags in millions of vehicles, appeared willing to pay \$14,000 a day in fines, rather than hand over documents that could leave it facing even more fines. A Maryland state law is being proposed by a Montgomery County legislator to give dealers the protections they need to disclose critical safety information. Read the full story at WJLA.com.

<http://www.wjla.com/articles/2015/02/proposed-md-law-pushes-for-transparency-in-auto-safety-issues-111777.html>

Employee Theft of \$25,000 Alleged at Car Title Service (Maryland)

A Mechanicsville woman has been charged with 26 theft offenses in court papers alleging she stole more than \$25,000 over the course of about two years while employed at a car tag and title service in Leonardtown. Read the full story at SomdNews.com.

<http://www.somdnews.com/article/20150223/NEWS/150229826/1074/section/news07/&template=southernMaryland>

Lawmakers Introduce a Dozen Bills Regulating License Plates (Rhode Island)

A dozen bills have been introduced in the legislature regulating license plates, including offering more specialty plates. The Providence Journal reports that one bill proposes to cut the number of plates for each vehicle from two to one. Another would allow vehicles heavier than 9,000 pounds to order vanity plates. Read the full story at BostonHerald.com.

http://www.bostonherald.com/news_opinion/national/northeast/2015/02/lawmakers_introduce_a_dozen_bills_regulating_license_plates

Vermont to Hold Driver's License Restoration Pilot Program

Drivers in five Vermont counties who have lost their licenses because they couldn't pay traffic fines are going to be given the opportunity to get their driving privileges back. Gov. Peter Shumlin and Chittenden County State's Attorney T.J. Donovan announced Tuesday a pilot program that will allow people who can't pay fines to negotiate lower payments. Read the full story at NorthCountryPublicRadio.org.

<http://www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/27607/20150225/vermont-to-hold-driver-s-license-restoration-pilot-program>

Vermont's Investigation Into Licenses-for-Illegals Fraud Spreads to Multiple States, DMV Offices

An investigation into fraudulent applications for Vermont's driver's privilege cards has spread to multiple states and Department of Motor Vehicle branches, according to the department's chief investigator. Read the full story at WatchDog.org.

<http://watchdog.org/202515/vermont-licenses-for-illegals/>

Region II

Oklahoma Watch: Released Offenders Face High Fees for Driver's Licenses

When offenders leave prison to re-enter society, one of the steepest barriers they face is finding a job. Then they encounter a second barrier: paying hundreds or thousands of dollars in fees to reinstate a driver's license so they can look for and keep a job. Oklahomans who lose a license because of failing to pay a traffic fine or appear in court on the matter may have to pay several hundred dollars to restore the license. Read the full story at TulsaWorld.com.

http://www.tulsaworld.com/homepagelatest/oklahoma-watch-released-offenders-face-high-fees-for-driver-s/article_7b126a73-420e-54ee-bc83-b489b6ff8dab.html

Legislation Would Let Tesla Sell in Texas

Let the car haggling resume at the Texas Capitol. A group of state lawmakers on Thursday filed legislation that would allow Tesla Motors to sell its luxury electric cars at as many as 12 stores in Texas, renewing the California-based company's challenge to a state law protecting auto dealers. Read the full story at GovTech.com.

<http://www.govtech.com/state/Legislation-Would-Let-Tesla-Sell-in-Texas.html>

Region III

State Eyes More Secure Driver's License to Avoid Flying Restrictions (Illinois)

Illinois is working on a plan to bring state driver's licenses up to federal security standards before new air travel restrictions kick in next year. Currently, Illinois licenses and identification cards do not meet minimum standards mandated by the Real ID Act, which passed in 2005 in the wake of 9/11. Read the full story at ChicagoTribune.com.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-drivers-license-airports-met-20150226-story.html#page=2>

Gas Tax Passes, Heads for Branstad's Desk (Iowa)

Iowa motorists could soon be paying higher state taxes at the gas pump for the first time in 26 years. A bill raising Iowa's tax on gasoline and diesel fuel by 10 cents a gallon was approved Tuesday by the Iowa House and Senate, and supporters were optimistic it would be signed by Gov. Terry Branstad. Read the full story at DesMoinesRegister.com.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/politics/2015/02/24/gas-tax-approved-iowa-senate/23943091/>

Kansas House Passes Drunk Driving Laws

The Kansas House has approved two bills changing the state's penalties for driving under the influence. The full House voted on the bills Thursday. One measure would increase penalties for drunk drivers who cause bodily harm to others in accidents, and the other would allow convicted drunk drivers to have the offense expunged from their record earlier. Read the full story at LJWorld.com.

<http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2015/feb/26/kansas-house-passes-drunk-driving-laws/>

Nebraska Considers Mandatory Seat Belts for School Buses

Nebraska lawmakers considering requiring seat belts on school buses heard conflicting accounts Monday about whether they improve safety. A bill by Sen. Robert Hilkemann of Omaha would require public school buses purchased after Jan. 1, 2016, to come equipped with lap-shoulder belts. Schools would have to demonstrate twice a year how to properly wear the belts. Read the full story at FremontTribune.com.

http://fremonttribune.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska-considers-mandatory-seat-belts-for-school-buses/article_dc159cc7-8b69-5e72-a731-af86a63844a5.html

Ohio House Committee Removes Distracted Driving Provisions from Budget Bill

The Ohio House Finance Committee removed provisions from a biennial budget bill Feb. 23 that would have increased penalties for distracted driving. The amendments were made during a short afternoon hearing on the two-year spending plan for the Ohio Department of Transportation and several other state agencies, a separate appropriations bill from the larger biennial state budget being considered by lawmakers. Read the full story at AuroraAdvocate.com.

<http://www.auroraadvocate.com/latest%20headlines/2015/02/23/ohio-house-committee-removes-distracted-driving-provisions-from-budget-bill>

Bill Would Require More Frequent Vision Checks for Older Drivers (Wisconsin)

A state lawmaker plans to reintroduce legislation which would require more frequent vision testing for older drivers in Wisconsin. State Senator Fred Risser said he was in the process of having the bill drafted even before video of a 92 year-old driver striking nine cars in a supermarket parking lot in Mayville was widely seen. Read the full story at WRN.com.

<http://www.wrn.com/2015/02/bill-would-require-more-frequent-vision-checks-for-older-drivers/>

Region IV

Alaska Becomes 3rd State with Legal Marijuana

Alaska on Tuesday became the third U.S. state to legalize the recreational use of marijuana for adults, but it was a subdued milestone. Unlike in Colorado and Washington state, there were no street parties and public smoking displays in Alaska's biggest cities. But backers of legal pot said the mild reaction was fitting because they are aiming to promote responsible consumption of marijuana as they work with lawmakers during the next few months in preparing its sale. Read the full story at WashingtonPost.com.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/alaska-becomes-3rd-state-with-legal-marijuana/2015/02/23/b6227f54-bbde-11e4-9dfb-03366e719af8_story.html

BOE Approves 6-Cent Cut in Statewide Gas Tax (California)

The state Board of Equalization on Tuesday approved lowering the statewide excise tax rate on gasoline by 6 cents. The 5-0 vote means the tax will decrease from 36 cents to 30 cents per gallon effective July 1, and remain there until June 30, 2016. Read the full story at SacBee.com.

http://www.sacbee.com/news/business/article11102798.html#emInl=Morning_Newsletter#storylink=cpy

DMV Announces New Appointment Opportunities for Customers (California)

Even as wait times begin leveling off since the launch of AB 60 in January, the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) recently announced new appointment opportunities for customers who need to visit a DMV office and highlighted major transactions that can be handled online or by telephone to avoiding visiting the DMV altogether. Read the full story at FontanaHeraldNews.com.

http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/business/article_d8b70be8-bdd7-11e4-9ed7-736301e79146.html

Colorado House Adds Money for Immigrant Driver's License Program

The Colorado House of Representatives gave initial approval Tuesday to releasing \$166,000 to the state Department of Motor Vehicles to operate five offices that issue driver's licenses to people in the country illegally, instead of just one office with long waits. Read the full story in the Denver Post.

http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_27591797/colorado-house-adds-money-immigrant-drivers-license-program

ITD's Teen Driver Website is Now Mobile Friendly (Idaho)

An important online resource for young drivers and their parents has become mobile-device friendly. Recent changes to the website, at www.idahoteendriving.org, allow the web-based resource to

smoothly display its highway safety-related content to smart phones, tablets and laptops. Read the full story at KPVI.com.

<http://www.kpvi.com/content/news/local/story/ITD-s-Teen-Driver-Website-is-Now-Mobile-Friendly/ggB63Pt0YOKFprJioPDBVQ.cspX>

Idaho Senate Panel Approves ID Compliance Extension Bill

Idaho is a step closer to asking the federal government for more time to start complying with the federal Real ID Act. The Idaho Senate Transportation Committee endorsed a bill Tuesday that would let the state Transportation Department ask the federal government to postpone the compliance deadline for one year. Read the full story at idahoStatesman.com.

http://www.idahostatesman.com/2015/02/24/3662749_idaho-senate-panel-approves-id.html?rh=1

Bill Clears Way for Self-Driving Cars on Idaho Roads

Self-driving cars may have seemed like something out of a science fiction movie just a few years ago. But numerous major car companies and startup companies are now developing the technology. And Idaho lawmakers want those companies to come to the Gem State. Read the full story at KTVB.com.

<http://www.ktvb.com/story/news/local/capitol-watch/2015/02/25/bill-clears-way-self-driving-cars-idaho-roads/24025523/>

Oregon House OK's 'Motor Voter' Bill

The Oregon House on Friday approved in a party-line vote the "Motor Voter" bill that would register all eligible Oregon drivers to vote, much to the delight of new Gov. Kate Brown and Democrat lawmakers and the dismay of House Republicans. The bill passed 35-24, split on party lines, and now goes to the Senate. Read the full story at KTVZ.com.

<http://m.ktvz.com/news/oregon-house-oks-motor-voter-bill/31387524>

Bill Would Let Businesses Sell Electricity for Electric Cars (Oregon)

A new measure backed by Idaho Power Co. would allow business owners to resell public utility electricity to electric car drivers. The House State Affairs Committee voted Tuesday to introduce a bill permitting companies to buy the electricity from a public utility and then resell it to charge electric car batteries. Read the full story at JRN.com.

<http://www.jrn.com/kivity/news/Bill-would-let-businesses-sell-electricity-for-electric-cars-294036481.html>

New Bill Could Make Teen Drivers Easier to Spot (Washington)

Teen drivers account for a disproportionate number of accidents out on the road, but lawmakers are hoping a new sign can help change that. A bill is being considered to create a pilot program in Clark

County that would require driver under the age of 18 to display a large, red "new driver" sticker in the back window of their car. Read the full story at KXLY.com.

<http://www.kxly.com/news/spokane-news/new-bill-could-make-teen-drivers-easier-to-spot/31515744>

Other News

Schumer: Bill Would Keep Unsafe Rental Cars Off the Roads

Sen. Charles Schumer says he's trying again with legislation to require car rental companies to fix vehicles subject to a manufacturer's recall before handing them over to customers. Read the full story at WNYT.com.

<http://wnyt.com/article/stories/S3713101.shtml?cat=300>

States Look To Reduce Ranks Of Uninsured Drivers

In 49 states and the District of Columbia, it's against the law to drive without car insurance. Nevertheless, more than 12 percent of all U.S. drivers are uninsured. Read the full story at InsuranceNewsNet.com.

<http://insurancenewsnet.com/oarticle/2015/02/20/states-look-to-reduce-ranks-of-uninsured-drivers-a-597853.html#.VOtbQgNAZ8E>

Showdown Looming Between Northwest States, Feds Over Driver's Licenses

Washington, Oregon and Idaho are trying to figure out how to keep their state driver's licenses from becoming obsolete in the eyes of the federal government. On Friday, the Idaho House passed a bill that would ask the feds for more time to come into compliance with federal ID security standards. Read the full story at BoiseStatePublicRadio.org.

<http://boisestatepublicradio.org/post/showdown-looming-between-northwest-states-feds-over-drivers-licenses-0>

UC San Diego Study will Track Elderly Drivers

... To find out which elderly drivers should be on our roads and which should not, U.C. San Diego researchers will be looking at driving patterns among the golden aged in San Diego as part of a national research study funded by AAA Insurance. Read the full story at Fox5SanDiego.com.

<http://fox5sandiego.com/2015/02/24/uc-san-diego-study-will-track-elderly-drivers/>

Google Describes How It Wants Self-Driving Cars To Be Regulated

Google representatives said Tuesday that they wanted regulation on self-driving cars to follow the basic model used on conventional cars — a self-reported analysis that does not include additional oversight by the California Department of Motor Vehicles. Read the full story at BizJournals.com.

<http://www.bizjournals.com/sacramento/news/2015/02/25/google-describes-how-it-wants-self-driving-cars-to.html?page=all>

Did You Know

CHEVY vs. FORD: A RIVALRY THAT SPANS GENERATIONS

We've all heard of bitter family rivalries, like the one between the Hatfields and the McCoys, and we've witnessed (and perhaps partake in) intense rivalries between sports teams and fans (Yankees and Red Sox, Cowboys and Redskins). One of the greatest business rivalries is the rivalry between the two auto giants, Chevrolet and Ford.

I never knew I was on one side or the other until I found myself in the midst of Chevy-lovers and began defending the "greatness" of my Ford (and my mom's Ford, and my dad's Ford). I began to wonder which one really is "the best"? My search for the answer online was inconclusive. I suppose the best I can say is, "it's a draw". What do you think?

Online resources:

- The Greatest Business Rivalries of all Time (DailyFinance.com)
<http://www.dailyfinance.com/2013/03/23/greatest-business-rivalries/#!fullscreen&slide=977289>
- Social Media Face Off: Chevrolet vs. Ford (business2community.com)
<http://www.business2community.com/social-media/social-media-face-chevrolet-vs-ford-0735945>
- Ford Mustang versus Chevrolet Camaro: The ultimate American car rivalry (DigitalTrends.com)
<http://www.digitaltrends.com/cars/mustang-vs-camaro-the-ultimate-american-car-rivalry/#ixzz3SunPsV5Q>
- The 9 Fiercest Modern Car Rivalries (PopularMechanics.com)
<http://www.popularmechanics.com/cars/g1581/the-9-fiercest-modern-car-rivalries/>
- Ford History (Ford.com) <https://corporate.ford.com/company/history.html>
- From 'See the USA in your Chevrolet' to 'Like a Rock,' Chevy Ads Run Deep (adage.com)
<http://adage.com/article/special-report-chevy-100/100-years-chevrolet-advertising-a-timeline/230636/>