

Law Enforcement Perspective on Dual License Plates



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History



- As early as 1925, experts in the transportation field recognized the benefits of standardized placement of license plates and proposed front and rear plate positioning.
 - Texas A & M Transportation Study 2012

Benefit of Two License Plates



- The ability to identify vehicles is critical to law enforcement and the use of two license plates increases that ability.
- License plates further enhance law enforcement's efforts to protect the public.

Benefits Continued



- The purpose of the license plate, also known as vehicle registration plates or “tags”, is to identify the vehicle and its ownership as well as show that the vehicle is registered with the licensing state and has been through specific tests, such as the safety inspection.

Benefits Continued



- In Missouri, a properly registered vehicle displaying license plates is presumed to have:
 - Passed a safety inspection. (Proof of safety inspection required at time of registration)
 - Is properly insured. (Proof of liability insurance is required at time of registration)
 - Further ensures that appropriate taxes have been paid.

Benefits Continued

- In Missouri, fines from citations (including those for no front plate/improper registration) are sent to the school district in the county of violation.



Benefits Continued- LPR



- License Plate Readers (LPR)- Can help to identify vehicles and criminals associated with them.
 - During late July, U.S. Marshals utilized LPR technology to locate a doctor wanted for murder. A nationwide BOLO was sent out and within minutes the doctor's vehicle passed through an LPR in West Virginia. He was arrested a short distance later at a toll booth.
 - With only one plate there is a 50% reduction in the ability to capture the information, thus reducing criminal apprehensions.

Benefits Continued- Tolls



- Tolls



- Without a front License plate, the E-470 corridor in Colorado would lose at least \$23.1 million in toll revenues or 34.5 % of their tolls on an annual basis.

➤ Texas A & M Transportation Study-2012

Benefits Continued



- Tolls continued:
 - Lack of front plates has a significant impact on the generation of photographic evidence related to fining of toll violators.
 - In Virginia 23% of toll violations could not be pursued due to a lack of license plate data.

➤ Texas A & M Transportation study-2012

Benefits Continued- CBP



- The United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported having one plate made a significant impact on their border processing.
- The major difference was that dual license plates allow CBP to operate more effectively.
 - Texas A & M Transportation Study-2012

Arguments for Removal



- Some states have taken steps to remove the front plate. Most argue that the issuance of one plate will save the state money. Others, argue for aesthetic reasons such as an ability to place vanity plates on the front (fraternity/sorority names, colleges, automobile dealers advertising, etc.)

Arguments for Removal



- A state of Washington on-line petition sought to reduce them to a single license plate. It cited increased fuel economy and an ability to free up officers for enforcement of more serious violations.
- It further claimed the front plate increased damage in accidents, which resulted in higher insurance costs for all.



Arguments for Removal



- In Missouri, cost savings and increased profits from registration renewals are routinely cited as reasons for moving to a single plate.
 - Materials for license plates are purchased in bulk, which keeps the price lower. Movement to a single plate would affect bulk discount pricing, possibly reducing any savings/profit.
 - In Missouri, the initial estimated cost to complete the IT portion of converting from two plates to one is \$15,364.00.



Costs

- License plates in Missouri cost \$1.63 per plate to manufacture. (Missouri license plates are manufactured by MVE-Corrections.)



What is the Real Price to Pay?

- The real price of losing front license plates could be higher than it looks and could easily outweigh any potential savings.

More Crime!



One Less Plate.

Criminal apprehension works better with two plates



- Enforcement
 - A member of the Missouri State Highway Patrol will meet more vehicles than he or she will follow.
 - Opportunity to observe the license plate is reduced by 50% for law enforcement officers and witnesses.



Get a Second Look



- Witnesses will get only one opportunity to view a particular plate, limiting information that is useful in follow-up investigations.
- Amber Alerts
- Stolen Vehicles
- Security Cameras

Types of Arrest commonly made in MO following stops for displaying only one license plate



- Driving while intoxicated
- Drug trafficking
- Warrants
- Driving while suspended/revoked
- No Insurance
- Violent Felons
- Probation violations
- Non support of a child

Cold Case Solved



- February 2008- Pulaski County
- Missouri Trooper stops a motorist for no front plate.
- Investigation revealed the driver not only witnessed a 2007 murder, but played a role in the commission.
- Driver identified two male subjects also involved.

Property Crimes



- September 2012- Polk County
- Missouri Trooper stops a driver for no front plate.
- The driver had three felony and two misdemeanor warrants.
- Property located in the vehicle cleared eight burglaries.

Traveling Meth Lab



- March 2012- St Francois County
- Missouri Trooper stops a driver for no front plate.
- Computer check of the rear license plate revealed the vehicle to be a “stored” vehicle.
- Driver was revoked.
- A search of the vehicle revealed an active meth lab. with anhydrous ammonia.

Driving While Intoxicated



- 2011
- Clay County, Missouri
- Pontiac Grand Prix stopped for no front license plate.
- Driver arrested for driving while intoxicated.

(One of many DWI arrests made annually in Missouri following stops for no front plate.)



Leaving the Scene



- November 2009
- Pettis County, Missouri
- Vehicle involved in leaving the scene accident.
- Front license plate left in a fence.
- Revoked/uninsured driver located later.

Leaving the Scene



Front plate used to show impact area



Fatality Leaving the Scene



The Expense of "Slide-Offs"



The End



QUESTIONS

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