

LICENSE PLATES

LEGISLATOR NOTICE

The Legislative Services Division is required to offer a brief history on the subject matter of a bill draft request prior to drafting (5-4-105, MCA; [Chapter 309, Laws of 2017](#)). The history must include related legislation introduced over the last five sessions and hyperlinks to the bill, hearing information, and fiscal notes. The legislation links below open to the page showing the status and history of bills introduced on this topic in the past. The bill text and any related fiscal notes can be accessed through the link at the top of that page.

Legislation can be complex and this history is not intended to be exhaustive. Please contact the drafter of the requested bill for more information.

Background Materials and Research

Topic Summary: Legislators have proposed numerous bills regarding license plates in the last five sessions.

In 2015 and 2017, the Legislature passed bills for replacement of license plates every ten years rather than every five years—in both instances the Governor vetoed the bills, and the Legislature’s override votes failed.

In 2017, the Legislature passed a law allowing motorcycles, and certain trailers and custom vehicles and street rods to display only one license plate. In 2011, the Legislature passed a law allowing for smaller license plates on motorcycles and certain trailers.

In 2009, the Legislature passed laws allowing the issuance of special veteran motorcycle plates and special gold star family plates to family members of persons eligible for a Gold Star Lapel Button. In 2013, the Legislature passed a law for next-of-kin plates.

Numerous bills have not passed, including bills exempting highway patrol officers from license plate fees, allowing residents of Mammoth Hot Springs to use Montana plates, creating plates for volunteer EMTs, allowing arresting officers to require the surrender of plates by uninsured motorists, revising requirements for custom car and street rod plates, and changing confidential decal laws.

Other Materials: Montana Department of Justice: [Plate Designs and Fees](#)

Introduced Legislation

2017

[House Bill 213](#) – Chapter Number Assigned -- AN ACT ALLOWING DISPLAY OF A SINGLE LICENSE PLATE ON CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES; PROVIDING FOR ISSUANCE OF A WAIVER OF THE REQUIREMENT THAT A FRONT LICENSE PLATE BE DISPLAYED AFTER AN INSPECTION AND PAYMENT OF AN INSPECTION FEE; REQUIRING THE CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER TO BE CARRIED IN THE MOTOR VEHICLE; REQUIRING MONEY COLLECTED FROM THE FEE TO BE DEPOSITED IN THE HIGHWAY SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT; AND AMENDING SECTION 61-3-301, MCA

[House Bill 217](#) – (H) Veto Override Failed in Legislature -- AN ACT REVISING THE REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE FOR STANDARD LICENSE PLATE; ALLOWING CERTAIN VEHICLE OWNERS TO RETAIN A LICENSE PLATE NUMBER; AMENDING SECTIONS 61-3-315, 61-3-321, AND 61-3-332, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE.

[House Bill 313](#) – (H) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES TO DISPLAY ONLY ONE OFFICIAL LICENSE PLATE; AMENDING SECTIONS 2-15-151, 2-17-421, 10-2-114, 44-4-205, 44-4-206, 49-4-302, 61-1-101, 61-3-224, 61-3-301, 61-3-302, 61-3-303, 61-3-320, 61-3-321, 61-3-331, 61-3-332, 61-3-333, 61-3-334, 61-3-335, 61-3-402, 61-3-403, 61-3-404, 61-3-405, 61-3-407, 61-3-411, 61-3-412, 61-3-413, 61-3-414, 61-3-421, 61-3-422, 61-3-423, 61-3-425, 61-3-426, 61-3-446, 61-3-448, 61-3-455, 61-3-458, 61-3-459, 61-3-460, 61-3-463, 61-3-464, 61-3-465, 61-3-466, 61-3-468, 61-3-474, 61-3-479, 61-3-480, 61-3-481, 61-3-562, 61-3-702, 61-3-722, 61-4-101, 61-4-102, 61-4-109, 61-4-123, 61-4-128, 61-4-129, 61-4-130, 61-4-221, 61-4-222, 61-4-223, 61-4-301, 61-4-307, 61-6-105, AND 61-6-304, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE."

2015

[House Bill 104](#) – (S) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT INCREASING THE FEE FOR LICENSE PLATES ISSUED FOR EACH PROPORTIONATELY REGISTERED MOTOR VEHICLE, TRAILER, SEMITRAILER, OR POLE TRAILER; CLARIFYING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S AUTHORITY TO REGISTER CERTAIN VEHICLES; DEFINING THE TERM "DEVICE"; AMENDING SECTIONS 61-3-702, 61-3-722, 61-4-307, AND 61-10-130, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE."

[House Bill 558](#) – (H) Tabled in Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING REQUIREMENTS AND PROHIBITIONS IN REGARD TO PIONEER, VINTAGE, AND ORIGINAL MONTANA LICENSE PLATES; EXTENDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; AMENDING SECTIONS 61-3-411, 61-3-412, AND 61-3-413, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE."

[House Bill 628](#) – (H) Veto Override Failed in Legislature -- AN ACT REVISING THE REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE FOR STANDARD LICENSE PLATES; ALLOWING CERTAIN VEHICLE OWNERS TO RETAIN A LICENSE PLATE NUMBER; AMENDING SECTIONS 61-3-315, 61-3-321, AND 61-3-332, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE.

2013

[House Bill 305](#) – Chapter Number Assigned -- AN ACT ALLOWING DEMONSTRATOR PLATES TO BE USED ON A VEHICLE THAT IS BEING LOANED TO A CUSTOMER FOR NOT MORE THAN 72 HOURS; AND AMENDING SECTION 61-4-129, MCA.

[House Bill 566](#) – Chapter Number Assigned -- AN ACT CREATING NEXT-OF-KIN SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES; AND AMENDING SECTION 61-3-458, MCA.

[House Bill 570](#) – (H) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REMOVING THE REQUIREMENT THAT A CUSTOM VEHICLE, STREET ROD, COLLECTOR'S ITEM, AND CERTAIN ORIGINALLY EQUIPPED MOTOR VEHICLES NOT BE USED FOR GENERAL TRANSPORTATION PURPOSES IN ORDER TO BE PERMITTED TO DISPLAY ONLY ONE LICENSE PLATE; AND AMENDING SECTION 61-3-320, MCA."

[Senate Bill 6](#) – (S) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING A VEHICLE OPERATOR WHO DOES NOT PROVIDE PROOF OF MOTOR VEHICLE LIABILITY INSURANCE OR AN INDEMNITY BOND TO SURRENDER THE LICENSE PLATES UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS; PROVIDING FOR THE RETURN OF THE LICENSE PLATES; AND AMENDING SECTION 61-6-302, MCA."

2011

[House Bill 171](#) – Chapter Number Assigned -- AN ACT REVISING LAWS RELATED TO LICENSE PLATE SIZES; DESIGNATING SMALL LICENSE PLATES AS THE DEFAULT SIZE FOR A TRAILER WITH A DECLARED WEIGHT OF LESS THAN 6,000 POUNDS; ALLOWING A PERSON REGISTERING A TRAILER WITH A DECLARED WEIGHT OF LESS THAN 6,000 POUNDS TO CHOOSE LARGE LICENSE PLATES; AMENDING SECTION 61-3-332, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE.

[House Bill 584](#) – Chapter Number Assigned -- AN ACT REVISING LICENSE PLATE LAWS; ALLOWING NEW STANDARD LICENSE PLATES TO BE OF CERTAIN PRIOR DESIGNS; AMENDING SECTIONS 61-3-301 AND 61-3-332, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE.

[Senate Bill 49](#) – Chapter Number Assigned -- AN ACT REVISING THE SIZE OF TRAILER LICENSE PLATES; ESTABLISHING THE SIZE OF MOTORCYCLE AND QUADRICYCLE LICENSE PLATES; DESIGNATING SMALL LICENSE PLATES AS THE DEFAULT SIZE FOR A TRAILER WITH A DECLARED WEIGHT OF LESS THAN 6,000 POUNDS; ALLOWING A PERSON REGISTERING A TRAILER WITH A DECLARED WEIGHT OF LESS THAN 6,000 POUNDS TO CHOOSE LARGE LICENSE PLATES; AMENDING SECTION 61-3-332, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE.

2009

[House Bill 271](#) – (H) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT EXEMPTING MONTANA HIGHWAY PATROL OFFICERS FROM FEES CHARGED FOR LICENSE PLATE ISSUANCE, REPLACEMENT, OR TRANSFER; AMENDING SECTIONS 61-3-321, 61-3-333, 61-3-406, 61-3-412, 61-3-415, 61-3-422, 61-3-459, 61-3-465, 61-3-480, AND 61-3-562, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE."

[House Bill 306](#) – Chapter Number Assigned -- AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO DESIGN AND ISSUE SPECIAL MOTORCYCLE LICENSE PLATES FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS, AND SPOUSES; REQUIRING THE DONATION FOR A PLATE TO BE DEPOSITED INTO THE SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE STATE VETERANS' CEMETERIES; AMENDING SECTIONS 61-3-455 AND 61-3-458, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE.

[House Bill 320](#) – (H) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING THAT CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES DISPLAY ONLY ONE OFFICIAL LICENSE PLATE; AMENDING SECTIONS 2-15-151, 2-17-421, 10-2-114, 44-4-205, 44-4-206, 49-4-302, 61-1-101, 61-3-224, 61-3-301, 61-3-302, 61-3-303, 61-3-320, 61-3-321, 61-3-331, 61-3-332, 61-3-333, 61-3-334, 61-3-335, 61-3-402, 61-3-403, 61-3-404, 61-3-405, 61-3-407, 61-3-411, 61-3-412, 61-3-413, 61-3-421, 61-3-422, 61-3-423, 61-3-424, 61-3-425, 61-3-426, 61-3-446, 61-3-448, 61-3-455, 61-3-458, 61-3-459, 61-3-460, 61-3-463, 61-3-464, 61-3-465, 61-3-466, 61-3-468, 61-3-474, 61-3-478, 61-3-479, 61-3-481, 61-3-562, 61-3-701, 61-3-702, 61-3-722, 61-4-101, 61-4-102, 61-4-109, 61-4-123, 61-4-128, 61-4-129, 61-4-130, 61-4-221, 61-4-222, 61-4-223, AND 61-6-304, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE."

[House Bill 373](#) – Chapter Number Assigned -- AN ACT CREATING GOLD STAR FAMILY SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES; AMENDING SECTIONS 49-4-302, 49-4-304, 61-3-407, 61-3-426, 61-3-458, AND 61-3-459, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE.

[House Bill 465](#) – (H) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO TITLE AND REGISTER MOTOR VEHICLES OWNED BY A PERMANENT RESIDENT OF MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK; REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT TO ISSUE A DRIVER'S LICENSE TO A PERMANENT RESIDENT OF MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK; DEFINING "PERMANENT RESIDENT OF MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS"; GRANTING THE DEPARTMENT RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; AMENDING SECTIONS 61-5-103, 61-5-105, AND 61-5-125, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE."

[Senate Bill 64](#) – (S) Died in Process -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT DEFINING VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN; CREATING A SPECIAL LICENSE PLATE FOR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS; PROVIDING A TAX CREDIT FOR VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN LICENSE PLATES; AND PROVIDING AN APPLICABILITY DATE."

[Senate Bill 106](#) – (S) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT DEFINING "VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER"; CREATING A SPECIAL LICENSE PLATE FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS; PROVIDING A TAX CREDIT FOR THE PURCHASE OF VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER LICENSE PLATES; AND PROVIDING AN APPLICABILITY DATE."

[Senate Bill 203](#) – (S) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ELIMINATING THE REQUIREMENT FOR PERIODIC REPLACEMENT OF STATE LICENSE PLATES; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 49-4-301, 49-4-302, 49-4-304, 61-3-301, 61-3-332, 61-3-407, 61-3-426, 61-3-446, 61-3-448, 61-3-458, 61-3-463, 61-3-464, 61-3-479, AND 61-4-128, MCA."

[Senate Bill 383](#) – (S) Died in Standing Committee -- A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING FULL-SIZE LICENSE PLATES FOR QUADRICYCLES AND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES; REVISING REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS FOR QUADRICYCLES AND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES; REQUIRING LICENSE PLATES ON THE FRONT AND REAR OF QUADRICYCLES AND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES; ALLOWING PERSONALIZED AND SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATES TO BE ISSUED TO QUADRICYCLES AND OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLES; AMENDING SECTIONS 23-2-804, 23-2-807, 23-2-809, 61-1-101, 61-3-301, 61-3-303, 61-3-313, 61-3-321, 61-3-332, 61-3-333, 61-3-402, 61-3-415, 61-3-458, 61-3-463, 61-3-479, 61-3-481, AND 61-3-509, MCA; AND PROVIDING A DELAYED EFFECTIVE DATE."