



*Henry McMaster*  
Governor

*Kevin A. Shwedo*  
Executive Director

## *State of South Carolina*

### *Department of Motor Vehicles*

August 23, 2021

The Honorable Wm. Weston J. Newton and William M. "Bill" Hixon  
House Legislative Oversight Committee  
228 Blatt Building  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

#### Via Email

Dear Chairman Newton and Subcommittee Chairman Hixon:

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) recently reviewed the recommendations that the House Legislative Oversight Committee issued to both the agency and the General Assembly following the 2019 study. Please allow this letter to serve as an update to where some of those recommendations stand.

#### **Recommendations to the DMV**

6. Update outdated regulations (e.g., a prohibition on locating truck driver training schools within 1,500 feet of a building operated by the agency)

During the first regular session of the 124<sup>th</sup> South Carolina General Assembly, the agency submitted Amended Regulations that were effective upon being printed in the State Register as Final Regulations on May 28, 2021. All Driver Training School Regulations are now found in Article 2, Chapter 90 of the Code of Regulations, and they encompass regulations for both commercial and non-commercial driver training schools. During this amendment, the DMV repealed the prohibition specifically mentioned above, so a driver training school can now be located within 1,500 feet of DMV offices. The DMV repealed other outdated or duplicative information during this process. This recommendation is now complete.

#### **Recommendations to the General Assembly for Statutory Changes**

12. Require inclusion on vehicle titles of "brands" (e.g. "salvage water," "salvage fire," etc.) that provide information about a vehicle's history

During the first regular session of the 124<sup>th</sup> South Carolina General Assembly, the agency worked with Chairlady Allison and Reps. Felder and Govan on H. 3101. Governor McMaster signed the bill on April 28, 2021, and it takes effect on October 25, 2021. Act #27 codifies vehicle title brands and affirms that the State of South Carolina will not participate in the deceptive practice of "title washing." Additionally, the law includes brands such as "salvage flood rebuilt" and "salvage fire rebuilt," which adds more transparency to the purchasing process. Previously, the agency only utilized the brand "salvage rebuilt" when describing vehicles that were once damaged but restored. The new brands inform consumers of the specific way a vehicle was damaged before it was rebuilt. The agency will proactively implement the section of Act #27 which codifies vehicle title brands in mid-September 2021. However, there is specific language in the law related to salvage pool operators which the agency will implement on the effective

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date since that language alters the legal way ownership is transferred. This recommendation is now complete.

14. Standardize the fees and eligibility requirements for different types of military license plates

During the first regular session of the 124<sup>th</sup> South Carolina General Assembly, the agency worked with Rep. B. Cox on H. 3805. Governor McMaster signed the bill on May 6, 2021, and it takes effect on May 6, 2022. Act #38 standardizes the fees, eligibility requirements, and privileges that come with special license plates for service members and veterans. The law reorganizes the Code and introduces categories such as valorous awards, distinguished service awards, and exemplary service awards, among others. Military license plates are categorized in the appropriate section of Chapter 3, Title 56, and all license plates within that section have consistent fees, eligibility requirements, and privileges. The agency will work with the State Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as other military-focused organizations, to ensure service members and veterans are aware of the license plates they are eligible for come 2022. This recommendation is now complete.

17. Clarify that fees DMV collects in accordance with Section 30-4-30 of the Freedom of Information Act that are not covered under Section 56-9-330 relating to the sale of motor vehicle records are to be retained by the Department

In the 2021-2022 Appropriations Act, Proviso 82.2 was amended to include, "The department may collect and retain fees to defray the cost associated with fulfilling a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request." This recommendation is now complete.

The DMV will continue to work both internally and with the General Assembly to complete recommendations from the 2019 study. As more of these items are explored or finalized, I will communicate those with you at that time.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to reach me or the agency's Deputy Director for Legislative Affairs, Lauren Phillips.

Respectfully,

  
Kevin A. Shwedo  
Executive Director

*We very much appreciate the opportunity to appear before the oversight committee. We will only get better as an organization as a result of the process.*