



THOMAS WEATHERSTON

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 62ND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on AB 280 before Assembly Committee on Transportation, August 18, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing on AB 280.

This bill states that a law enforcement officer may not pull over a type 1 automobile solely for a missing or obstructed front plate. Type 1 automobiles are vehicles under 8000 pounds, generally passenger cars. If pulled over for another offence, the driver may still be ticketed for the violation.

Wisconsin currently issues two license plates per car, and both of them must be displayed on the vehicle and be unobstructed. This bill does not change the number of license plates issued, nor does it remove the requirement to mount a front license plate on a car. This bill also does not change the fine for not having a front plate.

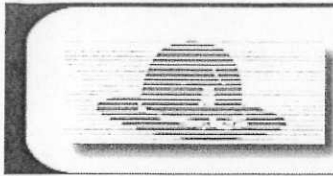
Certain types of cars, as well as many collector cars, do not have the holes required to mount a front plate. Drilling extra holes for a front plate will lower the value of the car, as well as adding an unnecessary expense for the owner.

There are currently 19 states that only require one license plate, including our neighbor to the north, Michigan. If a car on the road today had no front plate, an officer would still have to view the rear plate to determine if the car was registered in a state where that was legal. Automatic license plate readers make it even easier today for rear plates to be viewed and identified.

Since two license plates will still be issued for every car, and it is still the law to display both plates, the vast majority of car owners will continue to have front plates. Drivers without a front plate may still be ticketed, but they would have to have committed some other offense first before they could be pulled over.

Pulling over and ticketing someone with a missing or obstructed front license plate should not be a priority for our law enforcement officers, and this bill would remove that obligation so that they can focus on more serious issues.

Thank you again for holding this hearing on AB 280. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



Wisconsin Troopers' Association

Executive Director – Ryan Zukowski

Glen Jones – President

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TO: Chairman Ripp and Committee Members
Assembly Committee on Transportation

FR: Glen Jones, President – Wisconsin Troopers' Association

DA: August 18, 2015

RE: Opposition to AB 280, relating to enforcement of the display of motor vehicle registration plates.

While we appreciate Representative Weatherston's intent is not to remove the requirement for the front plate, the Wisconsin Troopers' Association opposes legislation that weakens the existing law. Front license plates assist law enforcement officials in locating vehicles subject to Amber alerts, identifying gas station drive offs and can provide the best leads in incidences of hit and run. Preserving the tools that assist Wisconsin's law enforcement personnel is a priority of the WTA, and with that in mind we oppose this change.