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2022-2023 Budget- Repeal of Act 89 Registration Vehicle Sticker Ban

1 message

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Dear PAOLMA Members,

On July 8, 2022 the Pennsylvania Senate and House of Representatives recessed for the summer after having enacted a $45.3 Billion Commonwealth of Pennsylvania budget for the Fiscal Year 2022-23 which began Friday, July 1st.

When the annual Commonwealth budget is passed each year it normally includes separate bills that provide narrative and guidance from the General Assembly and the Governor directing departments/agencies how to spend the appropriated monies, and these same bills may include policy initiatives agreed upon between the Governor and the legislature. Commonly known as "Code" bills, the Senate and House may enact a Fiscal Code bill (directing how money is generally allocated and spent), an Administrative Code bill (inserting various favored policy language into law), a Human Services Code bill (directing how health and human service dollars are to be spent), a Tax Code bill (raising, reducing , creating or eliminating various taxes), and an Education Code bill (disbursing monies for education to all school districts in Pennsylvania).

As you know, the On-Line Messengers Association Board of Directors has worked since last year's budget enactment to have language submitted into one of the Code bills mentioned above that would repeal the Act 89 elimination of vehicle registration stickers on PA license plates. Currently there are two stand-alone pieces of legislation that sit in the Senate and House and both are poised for a vote. The Association has worked to get these bills considered for final passage. SB 410 is sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Kim Ward (R-Greensburg) and is on the Senate calendar listed for a vote whenever the Majority Leader wants to call for it. HB 334 sponsored by Rep. Barry Jozwiak (R-Bernville) is similar repeal legislation sitting on the House calendar for a final vote if and when the House Majority Leader calls for it. The enactment of either of these stand-alone bills would require the return of the sticker to vehicle license plates.

But in an effort to quickly obtain this repeal the strategy has been, since late last year, to work on having the repeal of Act 89 language included in one of the Code bills once budget negotiations began earlier this year. Throughout last winter and spring, PAOLMA Board members visited Harrisburg to educate legislators on the issue. Some have visited their legislators in their local district offices. Meanwhile, we worked closely with key leaders of both the House and Senate, and met repeatedly with the Governor's Office, in an effort to get the repeal language into either the Administrative Code bill or the Fiscal Code bill—the two pieces of budget-related legislation that were most germane to having this type of policy language included.

Many factors impacted the results of this effort. In the end we were unable to overcome the ferocious opposition of Governor Wolf, his staff, and PennDOT to insert the repeal language into a code bill and have the Governor sign that bill into law. In fact, Governor Wolf told Senate and House leaders that he would veto any legislation that included language returning the stickers.

We are heartened by the very real and dynamic support of many key players in trying to get code language inserted. In particular, Senate President Pro Tempore Jake Corman, at one time seemingly unenthusiastic about bringing stickers back to the license plate, had numerous direct conversations with the Governor in an attempt to have the language

enacted. Senate Majority Leader Kim Ward did the same. In one case they both met with Governor Wolf on the matter in a final eleventh-hour effort to have repeal language enacted.

Representative Barry Jozwiak also worked tenaciously and did all he could to convince House leaders to promote this effort. Representative Jozwiak pushed House leadership just about every day in June and July to try to get them engaged on the matter. They, too, could not convince Governor Wolf.

The House of Representatives will return to Harrisburg on September 12, 2022 to begin its autumn session. The Senate returns a week later on September 19, 2022. The 2022-23 Commonwealth budget and accompanying code bills have been passed and the Governor has signed them as of this date. There is no ability to change the provisions therein until negotiations begin on the 2023-24 budget and code bills. Those negotiations will begin early in 2023.

Today, on the issue of repealing Act 89 related to stickers, PAOLMA will need to rely on SB 410 or HB 334 to be enacted prior to the end of the legislative session on November 30, 2022. Even with passage of either bill by both houses of the General Assembly it will still require the signature of the Governor. His opposition to bringing stickers back to vehicle license plates will make success difficult.

Your PAOLMA Board of Directors will likely confer on this matter over the summer and decide what strategy and next steps they expect to pursue on this issue.

While we are disappointed by the outcome of the effort to obtain this repeal during the budget negotiations of the past months, we are encouraged by the unanimous, active and enthusiastic advocacy on our behalf by Senate Republican leadership (Senators Corman and Kim Ward) and by the constant efforts of Representative Jozwiak. They care very much for the welfare of On-Line Messengers and are important allies in this debate with Governor Wolf and PennDOT.

Finally, to each and every PAOLMA member who worked on this issue and invested their time and effort to help educate policymakers about repealing Act 89 we must all say THANK YOU!!!! Beyond running your companies you volunteered a great deal of time to show the face of the industry in Pennsylvania to many elected officials who were unaware of the incredible services you provide to the public. Your work is recognized and deeply, DEEPLY appreciated.