

PLEASE VOTE 'NO' ON HB 1614 – As Amended (formerly HB 579).

HB 1614: – An Act relative to the international registration plan **and** relative to **registration of semi-trailers.**

KEY FACTS/POINTS

This bill creates a HUGELY disproportionate, 2-tiered registration FEE system for our residents. In order to obtain “**NH plates**” for semi-trailers, NH residents would have to pay **9 times more** than out-of-state residents would have to pay for our “**NH plates**”.

- **Example:**
 - A **non-resident** fleet of 30 semi-trailers for a 12-year period would cost **\$5,700** plus agent fees under this bill.
 - A **NH resident** fleet of 30 semi-trailers for a 12-year period would cost **\$49,830**. This is **90% more than non-residents, and includes the 10% discount provided in this bill.**

This bill creates a significant risk to municipal revenue derived from semi-trailer registrations and opens up a path for additional trailer types and other vehicles to be added to this concept. It is unreasonable to think our business-minded residents would not seek 'creative' alternatives (i.e., using an out-of-state address) to gain the same economical advantage this bill offers to non-residents. When current NH registrations are lost and registered as 'non-residents', the decreased revenue will be realized directly by municipalities.

This bill is truly a bad bill, and even municipal officials (town administrators, selectmen, finance directors, etc.) in the State are truly only beginning to understand and become knowledgeable about what has been going on with the State of Maine "poaching our motor vehicle revenue" (quote from the Senate Floor on the original amendment hearing). This bill only compounds that very serious and growing problem and lays the groundwork for municipalities' second largest revenue source to be quietly depleted.

Because our statutes never anticipated that NH residents would not register their vehicles in New Hampshire, there is no provision for municipalities to be able to track specific vehicle registrations from year to year. Clearly, the incentive to 'drive your vehicle' meant that you would pay the municipal permit fee and state registration fee in order to be able to do so. No one ever anticipated that you might be able to obtain a **New Hampshire plate** and decal from a non-governmental agent using an out-of-state address and completely avoid paying 100 percent of the municipal permit fees. Therefore, our state statutes do not protect this vital municipal revenue source from a bill like this.

It is **NOT LEGAL** for NH residents to ‘skirt the law’ and register their semi-trailers, utility trailers, campers, and boat trailers in Maine. **This is a direct violation to RSA 261:40.** It is also not legal for residents in other states to register their trailers or motor vehicles in Maine, Indiana and would not be legal to do so in New Hampshire.

This bill will make it “**LEGAL**” to do what some of our NH residents (particularly our NH Business Residents) are now doing **illegally.**

- Currently, NH residents are obtaining **MAINE PLATES** and **avoiding paying municipal permit fees** and State registration fees in direct violation of RSA 261:40 and registering their semi-trailers in Maine

This bill would allow a NH Business to **legally** use an out-of-state address and **avoid paying municipal permit fees for their semi-trailer registrations.**

- This bill would allow NH residents (businesses and individuals) to use an ‘out-of-state address’ and legally obtain **NH PLATES.**

This bill creates a slippery slope. This legislation (originally introduced as HB 586) applied to all types of trailers (utility trailers, boat trailers, camper trailers, and semi-trailers). At that time, it was agreed the “NH” concept should first be piloted through semi-trailers alone. If enacted into law, it is reasonable to expect this program to **expand beyond semi-trailers,** as it has in Maine – where you can now register all types of trailers and cars and trucks.

NO DATA has been presented which supports a large revenue stream for NH. Further, this bill is 'banking' on neighboring state residents all across the country violating their own state laws in order to 'buy' an inexpensive, multi-year NH plate.

New Hampshire municipal officials strongly support the creation of extra NH revenue for both the State and municipalities. We are all in agreement and 'on board' with the right legislation to create revenue, but **this bill is not it.**

This bill illuminates the benefit of strengthening our enforcement of our current laws requiring NH residents to register their trailers and all vehicles in New Hampshire and imposing higher financial consequences for violations. Currently penalties are in the vicinity of only \$100. We are losing revenue now to the State of Maine, and the loss is increasing each year. This bill will certainly exacerbate this already outgoing flow of NH's municipal MV revenue stream.

When NH residents/businesses use an out-of-state address to pay only the lower state fees set forth in HB 1614, there is no way to enforce this violation. Under this scenario, a NH resident/business could have a **NH plate** using an out-of-state address. The appearance will be 'no violation', but all municipal revenue will be lost.

This bill has also illuminated the need for law enforcement to be more aware of the Maine and Indiana plates currently parked overnight in our NH residents/businesses and being driven on our roads attached to NH truck cabs and chassis. Fines for violating our current statutes (currently \$100) need to be high enough to incentivize compliance.