

Wilmington, Delaware
May 22, 2025

#0053

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
McCoy**

WHEREAS, the Wilmington City Council 2022-2025 Strategic Plan prioritizes a “Safe and Secure Wilmington” by supporting legislative action that deters illicit activity. Vehicle registration plates are a crucial element of public safety and code enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the unique numbers issued to each vehicle not only certify that a vehicle meets the regulatory conditions to operate on public roadways but also provide a means of identifying the motorist responsible for each automobile; and

WHEREAS, emerging technologies have introduced new complexities to the process of safeguarding the vehicle registration system. While automatic license plate readers and other devices have streamlined the process for holding vehicle owners accountable, these systems still carry vulnerabilities that must be addressed; and

WHEREAS, illicit practices like license plate cloning, where an individual uses a duplicate of an existing vehicle registration number, can take advantage of license plate reader technology and place law-abiding motorists at risk of being sanctioned for behavior, such as traffic violations, that they did not engage in; and

WHEREAS, § 2128 of Title 21 permits a vehicle registration number to be reissued by the Division of Motor Vehicles to a new motorist if the previous vehicle registration has expired for more than one year. In cases where vehicle number plates have not been surrendered, this relatively short window for returning vehicle registration numbers to circulation can jeopardize the integrity of the vehicle registration system; and

WHEREAS, extending the time period for registration numbers associated with vehicle registration plates that have not been surrendered to the Division of Motor Vehicles could provide an additional barrier of protection against fraud involving the use of duplicate plates.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that this Council urges the Delaware General Assembly to amend Title 21 of the Delaware Code regarding conditions permitting reissuance of vehicle registration numbers to require an extended timeframe for reissuing vehicle registration numbers associated with license plates that have not been surrendered to the Division of Motor Vehicles.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as our State works to keep pace with the technological threats to the vehicle registration number system, this adaptation can provide meaningful relief for motorists who have experienced the impacts of license plate duplication.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: The Wilmington City Council 2022-2025 Strategic Plan prioritizes a “Safe and Secure Wilmington” by supporting legislative action that deters illicit activity. This Resolution requests that the honorable members of the Delaware General Assembly amend Title 21 of the Delaware Code regarding conditions permitting reissuance of vehicle registration numbers to require an extended timeframe for reissuing vehicle registration numbers associated with license plates that have not been surrendered to the Division of Motor Vehicles. As our State works to keep pace with the technological threats to the vehicle registration number system, this adaptation can provide meaningful relief for motorists who have experienced the impacts of license plate duplication.