



NEWS

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SB 773 signed by Governor Brown

Measure calls for study of unregistered and fraudulently registered vehicles

SAN FRANCISCO – Last week, Governor Brown signed Senate Bill 773, authored by Senator Ben Allen and sponsored by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

This is the first time the California Legislature has looked at the issue of registration fraud, and the measure had unanimous, bipartisan support. SB 773 requests that the University of California study the problem of unregistered and fraudulently registered vehicles in the state. Unregistered and fraudulently registered vehicles produce emissions of a higher magnitude than registered vehicles on the road. These unregistered and fraudulently registered vehicles impact air quality and public health in the Bay Area and throughout California.

“Unregistered vehicles avoid California’s Smog Check program established to reduce the number of heavily polluting cars on roadways,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “Not complying with the state’s registration requirements enables unregistered cars to pollute our neighborhoods and cities.”

Motor vehicles are the number one source of air pollution in the Bay Area and California. The state’s Smog Check program is the primary tool for reducing emissions from highly polluting motor vehicles. Unregistered and fraudulently registered motor vehicles skip the Smog Check program, resulting in more highly polluting vehicles on the roads that diminish air quality.

“This is the first step toward curbing the excessive air pollution generated by unregistered vehicles,” said Senator Ben Allen. “I look forward to the University of California’s recommendations on how best to bring these cars into compliance with air quality laws.”

SB 773 requires the California Department of Motor Vehicles to distribute information to motorists on ways to reduce theft of vehicle registration. It also has the University of California recommend to the legislature potential solutions to combat this problem.

A federal study found that 6 percent of fatal accidents in California involve an unregistered vehicle. Studies in other states found that 2 to 5 percent of the cars on the road were not registered, and those states had lower registration and insurance costs and more lenient emissions inspections, in comparison to California. In addition to the significant public health concerns, these studies imply financial losses of many tens of millions of dollars or more to local governments and the state.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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