

Act No. 397
Public Acts of 2000
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**STATE OF MICHIGAN
90TH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2000**

Introduced by Senators Bullard and DeBeaussaert

ENROLLED SENATE BILL No. 1243

AN ACT to amend 1949 PA 300, entitled "An act to provide for the registration, titling, sale, transfer, and regulation of certain vehicles operated upon the public highways of this state or any other place open to the general public or generally accessible to motor vehicles and distressed vehicles; to provide for the licensing of dealers; to provide for the examination, licensing, and control of operators and chauffeurs; to provide for the giving of proof of financial responsibility and security by owners and operators of vehicles; to provide for the imposition, levy, and collection of specific taxes on vehicles, and the levy and collection of sales and use taxes, license fees, and permit fees; to provide for the regulation and use of streets and highways; to create certain funds and grant programs; to provide for the appropriation of money for certain grant programs; to provide penalties and sanctions for a violation of this act; to provide for civil liability of owners and operators of vehicles and service of process on residents and nonresidents; to provide for the levy of certain assessments; to provide for the enforcement of this act; to provide for the creation of and to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state and local agencies; to repeal all other acts or parts of acts inconsistent with this act or contrary to this act; and to repeal certain parts of this act on a specific date," by amending sections 217, 222, and 251 (MCL 257.217, 257.222, and 257.251), section 217 as amended by 1998 PA 247, section 222 as amended by 1999 PA 267, and section 251 as amended by 1998 PA 455.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Sec. 217. (1) An owner of a vehicle that is subject to registration under this act shall apply to the secretary of state, upon an appropriate form furnished by the secretary of state, for the registration of the vehicle and issuance of a certificate of title for the vehicle. Effective January 1, 1994, a vehicle brought into this state from another state or jurisdiction that has a rebuilt, salvage, scrap, or comparable certificate of title issued by that other state or jurisdiction shall be issued a rebuilt, salvage, or scrap certificate of title by the secretary of state. The application shall be accompanied by the required fee. An application for a certificate of title shall bear the signature of the owner. The application shall contain all of the following:

- (a) The owner's name, the owner's bona fide residence, and either of the following:
 - (i) The owner's mailing address, if the owner is an individual.
 - (ii) The owner's business address, if the owner is a firm, association, or corporation.

(b) A description of the vehicle including the make or name, style of body, and model year; the number of miles, not including the tenths of a mile, registered on the vehicle's odometer at the time of transfer; whether the vehicle is to be or has been used as a taxi or police vehicle, or by a political subdivision of this state, unless the vehicle is owned by a dealer and loaned or leased to a political subdivision of this state for use as a driver education vehicle; whether the

vehicle has previously been issued a salvage or rebuilt certificate of title from this state or a comparable certificate of title from any other state or jurisdiction; vehicle identification number; and the vehicle's weight fully equipped, if a passenger vehicle registered in accordance with section 801(1)(a), and, if a trailer coach or pickup camper, in addition to the weight, the manufacturer's serial number, or in the absence of the serial number, a number assigned by the secretary of state. A number assigned by the secretary of state shall be permanently placed on the trailer coach or pickup camper in the manner and place designated by the secretary of state.

(c) A statement of the applicant's title and the names and addresses of the holders of security interests in the vehicle and in an accessory to the vehicle, in the order of their priority.

(d) Further information that the secretary of state reasonably requires to enable the secretary of state to determine whether the vehicle is lawfully entitled to registration and the owner entitled to a certificate of title. If the secretary of state is not satisfied as to the ownership of a late model vehicle or other vehicle having a value over \$2,500.00, before registering the vehicle and issuing a certificate of title, the secretary of state may require the applicant to file a properly executed surety bond in a form prescribed by the secretary of state and executed by the applicant and a company authorized to conduct a surety business in this state. The bond shall be in an amount equal to twice the value of the vehicle as determined by the secretary of state and shall be conditioned to indemnify or reimburse the secretary of state, any prior owner, and any subsequent purchaser of the vehicle and their successors in interest against any expense, loss, or damage, including reasonable attorney's fees, by reason of the issuance of a certificate of title for the vehicle or on account of any defect in the right, title, or interest of the applicant in the vehicle. An interested person has a right of action to recover on the bond for a breach of the conditions of the bond, but the aggregate liability of the surety to all persons shall not exceed the amount of the bond. The bond shall be returned at the end of 3 years, or before 3 years if the vehicle is no longer registered in this state and the currently valid certificate of title is surrendered to the secretary of state, unless the secretary of state has received notification of the pendency of an action to recover on the bond. If the secretary of state is not satisfied as to the ownership of a vehicle that is valued at \$2,500.00 or less and that is not a late model vehicle, the secretary of state shall require the applicant to certify that the applicant is the owner of the vehicle and entitled to register and title the vehicle.

(e) Except as provided in subdivision (f), an application for a commercial vehicle shall also have attached a scale weight receipt of the motor vehicle fully equipped as of the time the application is made. A scale weight receipt is not necessary if there is presented with the application a registration receipt of the previous year that shows on its face the empty weight of the motor vehicle as registered with the secretary of state that is accompanied by a statement of the applicant that there has not been structural change in the motor vehicle that has increased the empty weight and that the previous registered weight is the true weight.

(f) An application for registration of a vehicle on the basis of elected gross weight shall include a declaration by the applicant specifying the elected gross weight for which application is being made.

(g) If the application is for a certificate of title of a motor vehicle registered in accordance with section 801(1)(q), the application shall include the manufacturer's suggested base list price for the model year of the vehicle. Annually, the secretary of state shall publish a list of the manufacturer's suggested base list price for each vehicle being manufactured. Once a base list price is published by the secretary of state for a model year for a vehicle, the base list price shall not be affected by subsequent increases in the manufacturer's suggested base list price but shall remain the same throughout the model year unless changed in the annual list published by the secretary of state. If the secretary of state's list has not been published for that vehicle by the time of the application for registration, the base list price shall be the manufacturer's suggested retail price as shown on the label required to be affixed to the vehicle under section 3 of the automobile information disclosure act, Public Law 85-506, 15 U.S.C. 1232. If the manufacturer's suggested retail price is unavailable, the application shall list the purchase price of the vehicle as defined in section 801(4).

(2) Beginning October 1, 1999, the secretary of state shall require an applicant for registration of a leased pickup truck or passenger vehicle that is subject to registration under this act, except a vehicle that is subject to registration tax under section 801g, to disclose in writing the lessee's name, the lessee's bona fide residence, and either of the following:

(a) The lessee's Michigan driver license number or Michigan personal identification number or, if the lessee does not have a Michigan driver license or Michigan personal identification number, the lessee's mailing address, if the lessee is an individual.

(b) The lessee's business address, if the lessee is a firm, association, or corporation.

(3) The secretary of state shall maintain the information described in subsection (2) on the secretary of state's computer records.

(4) A dealer selling or exchanging vehicles required to be titled, within 15 days after delivering a vehicle to the purchaser, and a person engaged in the sale of vessels required to be numbered by part 801 of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.80101 to 324.80199, within 15 days after delivering a boat trailer weighing less than 2,500 pounds to the purchaser, shall apply to the secretary of state for a new title, if required, and transfer or secure registration plates and secure a certificate of registration for the vehicle or boat trailer, in the name of the purchaser. The dealer's license may be suspended or revoked in accordance with section 249 for failure to

apply for a title when required or for failure to transfer or secure registration plates and certificate of registration within the 15 days required by this section. If the dealer or person fails to apply for a title when required, and to transfer or secure registration plates and secure a certificate of registration and pay the required fees within 15 days of delivery of the vehicle or boat trailer, a title and registration for the vehicle or boat trailer may subsequently be acquired only upon the payment of a transfer fee of \$15.00 in addition to the fees specified in section 806. The purchaser of the vehicle or boat trailer shall sign the application, including, when applicable, the declaration specifying the maximum elected gross weight, as required by subsection (1)(f), and other necessary papers to enable the dealer or person to secure the title, registration plates, and transfers from the secretary of state.

(5) If a vehicle is delivered to a purchaser who has valid Michigan registration plates that are to be transferred to the vehicle, and an application for title, if required, and registration for the vehicle is not made before delivery of the vehicle to the purchaser, the registration plates shall be affixed to the vehicle immediately, and the dealer shall provide the purchaser with an instrument in writing, on a form prescribed by the secretary of state, which shall serve as a temporary registration for the vehicle for a period of 15 days from the date the vehicle is delivered.

(6) An application for a certificate of title that indicates the existence of a security interest in the vehicle or in an accessory to the vehicle, if requested by the security interest holder, shall be accompanied by a copy of the security agreement which need not be signed. The request may be made of the seller on an annual basis. The secretary of state shall indicate on the copy the date and place of filing of the application and return the copy to the person submitting the application who shall forward it to the holder of the security interest named in the application.

(7) If the seller does not prepare the credit information, contract note, and mortgage, and the holder, finance company, credit union, or banking institution requires the installment seller to record the lien on the title, the holder, finance company, credit union, or banking institution shall pay the seller a service fee of not more than \$10.00. The service fee shall be paid from the finance charges and shall not be charged to the buyer in addition to the finance charges. The holder, finance company, credit union, or banking institution shall issue its check or bank draft for the principal amount financed, payable jointly to the buyer and seller, and there shall be imprinted on the back side of the check or bank draft the following:

“Under Michigan law, the seller must record a first lien in favor of (name of lender) _____ on the vehicle with vehicle identification number _____ and title the vehicle only in the name(s) shown on the reverse side.” On the front of the sales check or draft, the holder, finance company, credit union, or banking institution shall note the name(s) of the prospective owner(s). Failure of the holder, finance company, credit union, or banking institution to comply with these requirements frees the seller from any obligation to record the lien or from any liability that may arise as a result of the failure to record the lien. A service fee shall not be charged to the buyer.

(8) In the absence of actual malice proved independently and not inferred from lack of probable cause, a person who in any manner causes a prosecution for larceny of a motor vehicle; for embezzlement of a motor vehicle; for any crime an element of which is the taking of a motor vehicle without authority; or for buying, receiving, possessing, or aiding in the concealment of a stolen, embezzled, or converted motor vehicle knowing that the motor vehicle has been stolen, embezzled, or converted, is not liable for damages in a civil action for causing the prosecution. This subsection does not relieve a person from proving any other element necessary to sustain his or her cause of action.

Sec. 222. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this act, the secretary of state shall issue a registration certificate and a certificate of title when registering a vehicle and upon receipt of the required fees. A vehicle brought into this state from another state or jurisdiction that has a rebuilt, salvage, or scrap certificate of title issued by that other state or jurisdiction shall be issued a rebuilt, salvage, or scrap certificate of title by the secretary of state.

(2) The registration certificate shall be delivered to the owner and shall contain on its face the date issued, the name and address of the owner, the registration number assigned to the vehicle, and a description of the vehicle as determined by the secretary of state.

(3) The certificate of title shall be manufactured in a manner to prohibit as nearly as possible the ability to reproduce, alter, counterfeit, forge, or duplicate the certificate of title without ready detection and contain on its face the identical information required on the face of the registration certificate; if the vehicle is a motor vehicle, the number of miles, not including the tenths of a mile, registered on the vehicle's odometer at the time of transfer; whether the vehicle is to be used or has been used as a taxi, as a police vehicle, or by a political subdivision of this state, unless the vehicle is owned by a dealer and loaned or leased to a political subdivision of this state for use as a driver education vehicle; whether the vehicle is a salvage vehicle; if the vehicle has previously been issued a rebuilt certificate of title from this state or a comparable certificate of title from any other state or jurisdiction; if the vehicle has been issued a scrap certificate of title from this state or a comparable certificate of title from any other state or jurisdiction; if the owner or co-owner or lessee or co-lessee of the vehicle is subject to registration denial under section 219(1)(d); a statement of the owner's title and of all security interests in the vehicle or in an accessory on the vehicle as set forth in the application; the date that the application was filed; and any other information that the secretary of state may require.

(4) The certificate of title shall contain a form for assignment of title or interest and warranty of title by the owner with space for the notation of a security interest in the vehicle and in an accessory on the vehicle, which at the time of a transfer shall be certified and signed, and space for a written odometer mileage statement that is required upon transfer pursuant to section 233a. The certificate of title may also contain other forms that the secretary of state considers necessary to facilitate the effective administration of this act. The certificate shall bear the coat of arms of this state.

(5) The certificate of title shall be mailed or delivered to the owner or other person the owner may direct in a separate instrument, in a form the secretary of state shall prescribe.

(6) A person who intentionally reproduces, alters, counterfeits, forges, or duplicates a certificate of title or who uses a reproduced, altered, counterfeited, forged, or duplicated certificate of title shall be punished as follows:

(a) If the intent of reproduction, alteration, counterfeiting, forging, duplication, or use was to commit or aid in the commission of an offense punishable by imprisonment for 1 or more years, the person committing the reproduction, alteration, counterfeiting, forging, duplication, or use is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for a period equal to that which could be imposed for the commission of the offense the person had the intent to aid or commit. The court may also assess a fine of not more than \$10,000.00 against the person.

(b) If the intent of the reproduction, alteration, counterfeiting, forging, duplication, or use was to commit or aid in the commission of an offense punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year, the person committing the reproduction, alteration, counterfeiting, forging, duplication, or use is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or a fine of not more than \$1,000.00, or both.

(7) The certificate of title for a police vehicle, a vehicle owned by a political subdivision of this state, a salvage vehicle, a rebuilt vehicle, and a scrap vehicle shall be different in color from the certificate of title for all other vehicles unless the vehicle is loaned or leased to a political subdivision of this state for use as a driver education vehicle.

(8) A scrap certificate of title shall contain a legend that the vehicle is not to be titled or registered and is to be used for parts or scrap metal only.

(9) A certificate of title shall not be issued for a vehicle which has had a salvage certificate of title unless the certificate of title contains a legend that discloses the vehicle's former condition to consumers and potential purchasers.

Sec. 251. (1) Each new vehicle dealer, used vehicle dealer, and broker shall maintain a record in a manner prescribed by the secretary of state of each vehicle of a type subject to titling under this act that is bought, sold, or exchanged by the dealer or received or accepted by the dealer for sale or exchange.

(2) Each record shall contain the date of the purchase, sale, or exchange or receipt for the purpose of sale, a description of the vehicle, together with the name and address of the seller, the purchaser, and the alleged owner or other persons from whom the vehicle was purchased or received, or to whom it was sold or delivered. The record shall contain a copy of all odometer mileage statements received by the dealer upon purchasing or acquiring a vehicle and a copy of the odometer mileage statement furnished by the dealer upon sale of a vehicle as prescribed in section 233a. If the vehicle is purchased, sold, leased, or exchanged through a broker, the record shall include the broker's name and dealer license number and the amount of the broker's fee, commission, compensation, or other valuable consideration paid by the purchaser or lessee or paid by the dealer, or both. The records of all vehicles purchased, sold, leased, or exchanged through a broker maintained by the secretary of state shall be in an electronic format determined by the secretary of state. A dealer shall retain for not less than 5 years each odometer mileage statement the dealer receives and each odometer mileage statement furnished by the dealer upon the sale of a vehicle. The description of the vehicle, in the case of a motor vehicle, shall also include the vehicle identification number and other numbers or identification marks as may be on the vehicle, and shall also include a statement that a number has been obliterated, defaced, or changed, if that is the fact. For a trailer or semitrailer, the record shall include the vehicle identification number and other numbers or identification marks as may be on the trailer or semitrailer.

(3) Not more than 20 days after the delivery of the vehicle, the seller shall deliver to the buyer in person or by mail to the buyer's last known address a duplicate of a written statement, on a form prescribed by the secretary of state in conjunction with the department of treasury, describing clearly the name and address of the seller, the name and address of the buyer, the vehicle sold to the buyer, the cash sale price of the vehicle, the cash paid down by the buyer, the amount credited the buyer for a trade-in, a description of the trade-in, the amount charged for vehicle insurance, stating the types of insurance covered by the insurance policy, the amount charged for a temporary registration plate, the amount of any other charge and specifying its purpose, the net balance due from the buyer, and a summary of insurance coverage to be affected. If the vehicle sold is a new motor home, the written statement shall contain a description, including the year of manufacture, of every major component part of the vehicle that has its own manufacturer's certificate of origin. The written statement shall disclose if the vehicle sold is a vehicle that the seller had loaned or leased to a political subdivision of this state for use as a driver education vehicle. The written statement shall be dated, but not later than the actual date of delivery of the vehicle to the buyer. The original and all copies of the prescribed form shall contain identical information. The statement shall be furnished by the seller, shall be signed by the seller or the seller's agent and by the buyer, and shall be filed with the application for new title or registration.

Failure of the seller to deliver this written statement to the buyer does not invalidate the sale between the seller and the buyer.

(4) A retail vehicle sale is void unless both of the following conditions are met:

(a) The sale is evidenced by a written memorandum that contains the agreement of the parties and is signed by the buyer and the seller or the seller's agent.

(b) The agreement contains a place for acknowledgment by the buyer of the receipt of a copy of the agreement or actual delivery of the vehicle is made to the buyer.

(5) Each dealer record and inventory, including the record and inventory of a vehicle scrap metal processor not required to obtain a dealer license, shall be open to inspection by a police officer or an authorized officer or investigator of the secretary of state during reasonable or established business hours.

(6) A dealer licensed as a distressed vehicle transporter shall maintain records in a form as prescribed by the secretary of state. The records shall identify each distressed vehicle that is bought, acquired, and sold by the dealer. The record shall identify the person from whom a distressed vehicle was bought or acquired and the dealer to whom the vehicle was sold. The record shall indicate whether a certificate of title or salvage certificate of title was obtained by the dealer for each vehicle.

(7) A dealer licensed under this act shall maintain records for a period of 5 years. The records shall be made available for inspection by the secretary of state or other law enforcement officials. The secretary of state shall inspect a dealer once every 4 years and as determined necessary by the secretary of state or a law enforcement officer. The secretary of state may issue an order summarily suspending the license of a dealer pursuant to section 92 of the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.292, based on an affidavit by a person familiar with the facts set forth in the affidavit that the dealer has failed to maintain the records required by this act or failed to provide the records for inspection as requested by the secretary of state, or has otherwise hindered, obstructed, or prevented the inspection of records authorized under this section. The dealer to whom the order is directed shall comply immediately, but on application to the department shall be afforded a hearing within 30 days pursuant to the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328. On the basis of the hearing, the summary order shall be continued, modified, or held in abeyance not later than 30 days after the hearing.

(8) A dealer licensed as a vehicle salvage pool operator or broker shall maintain records in a form as prescribed by the secretary of state. The records shall contain a description of each vehicle or salvageable part stored by the dealer, the name and address of the insurance company or person storing the vehicle or salvageable part, the period of time the vehicle or salvageable part was stored, and the person acquiring the vehicle or salvageable part. In the case of a late model vehicle, a record of the purchase or sale of a major component part of the vehicle shall be maintained identifying the part purchased or sold, the name and address of the seller or purchaser, the date of the purchase or sale, and the identification number assigned to the part by the dealer. The record of the purchase or sale of a part shall be maintained in or attached to the dealer's police book or hard copy of computerized data entries and reference codes and shall be accessible at the dealer's location. In addition, a dealer licensed as a broker shall maintain a record of the odometer mileage reading of each vehicle sold pursuant to an agreement between the broker and the buyer or the broker and the seller. The record of odometer mileage shall be maintained for 5 years and shall contain all of the information required by section 233a.

(9) A dealer licensed as a used vehicle parts dealer or an automotive recycler shall maintain records in a form prescribed by the secretary of state. The records shall contain the date of purchase or acquisition of the vehicle, a description of the vehicle including the color, and the name and address of the person from whom the vehicle was acquired. If the vehicle is sold, the record shall contain the date of sale and the name and address of the purchaser. The record shall indicate if the certificate of title or salvage or scrap certificate of title was obtained by the dealer. In the case of a late model vehicle, a record of the purchase or sale of a major component of the vehicle shall be maintained identifying the part purchased or sold, the name and address of the seller or purchaser, the date of the purchase or sale, and the identification number assigned to the part by the dealer, except that a bumper remanufacturer is not required to maintain a record of the purchase of a bumper. However, a bumper remanufacturer shall assign and attach an identification number to a remanufactured bumper and maintain a record of the sale of the bumper. The record of the purchase or sale of a part shall be maintained in or attached to the dealer's police book or hard copy of computerized data entries and reference codes and shall be accessible at the dealer's location.

(10) A dealer licensed as a vehicle scrap metal processor shall maintain records as prescribed by the secretary of state. As provided in section 217c, the records shall contain for a vehicle purchased from a dealer a copy of the scrap vehicle inventory, including the name and address of the dealer, a description of the vehicle acquired, and the date of acquisition. If a vehicle is purchased or acquired from a person other than a dealer, the record shall contain the date of acquisition, a description of the vehicle, including the color, the name and address of the person from whom the vehicle was acquired, and whether a certificate of title or salvage or scrap certificate of title was obtained by the dealer.

(11) A dealer licensed as a foreign salvage vehicle dealer shall maintain records in a form prescribed by the secretary of state. The records shall contain the date of purchase or acquisition of each distressed vehicle, a description of the vehicle including the color, and the name and address of the person from whom the vehicle was acquired. If the vehicle

is sold, the record shall contain the date of sale and the name and address of the purchaser. The record shall indicate if the certificate of title or salvage or scrap certificate of title was obtained by the dealer. In the case of a late model vehicle, a record of the purchase or sale of each salvageable part purchased or acquired in this state shall be maintained and the record shall contain the date of purchase or acquisition of the part, a description of the part, the identification number assigned to the part, and the name and address of the person to or from whom the part was purchased, acquired, or sold. The record of the sale, purchase, or acquisition of a part shall be maintained in the dealer's police book. The police book shall only contain vehicles and salvageable parts purchased in this state or used in the repair of a vehicle purchased in this state. The police book and the records of vehicle part sales, purchases, or acquisitions shall be made available at a location within the state for inspection by the secretary of state within 48 hours after a request by the secretary of state.

(12) The secretary of state shall make periodic unannounced inspections of the records, facilities, and inventories of automotive recyclers and used or secondhand vehicle parts dealers.

(13) The secretary of state may promulgate rules to implement this section pursuant to the administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to 24.328.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.

Carol Morey Viventi

Secretary of the Senate.

Jay E. Randall

Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Approved

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Governor.