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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

TRANSPORTATION, CHAIRMAN
COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
RULES

October 3, 2000

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Betty Serian, Deputy Secretary
PennDOT
Ninth floor - Forum Place
555 Walnut Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1900

Dear Betty,

I am writing to ask the Department to put a temporary hold on the implementation of the pilot program designed for the City of Philadelphia regarding vehicle validation stickers.

I have heard numerous concerns from legislators and law enforcement officials that lead me to believe that the program, as it is designed to be implemented this month, is flawed. At the very least, it will cause increased criminal activity in the suburbs and venues where commuters park and at the worst, could cause racial, ethnic and regional profiling by officers who will know where a person lives simply by viewing the rear of the vehicle.

Representatives of the Pennsylvania State Police have expressed a laundry list of potential problems as well. I am told that PennDOT has as ignored these in their haste to implement a program that was designed unilaterally by the Department.

I remind you that the legislation regarding young drivers contained what I thought would be a helpful step toward solving the problem of sticker theft in Philadelphia. Act 23 established a committee to study the problem and the committee issued a report which made four recommendations. A sticker in the back window was not among the recommendations of the blue ribbon panel. How can PennDOT justify pushing through this pilot with no basis? Where is the empirical evidence that this program will work?

Finally I have never convened a Transportation Committee meeting to vote on a PennDOT regulation since I have become chairman of this committee. Without your assurances that you will postpone the pilot until we can meet the concerns that I have outlined, I feel that it is my duty to call such a meeting on Wednesday of this week.

Please contact me immediately so that I will know the Department's stance on this issue. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Geist

Chairman House Transportation Committee

CC: Hon. John Perzel
Hon. Joseph Battisto
Hon. Roger Madigan
Hon. J. Barry Stout
Robert Nyce
Hon. Lita I. Cohen