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November 22, 2011

Senator Thomas M. McGee  
Committee on Transportation  
Room 190C  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Representative William M. Straus  
Committee on Transportation  
Room 134  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Support of Senate Bill S1798

Dear Honorable Chairmen:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Major City Chiefs of Police Association we would like to offer our strong support for SB 1798 which would improve the identification process of Massachusetts license plates.

The simple process of adding a single symbol to the plate has been tested and proven to dramatically improve the ability to recognize, remember, and report license plate types by all age groups of witnesses including children.

While this legislation was proposed to improve the safety of children, the truth is that it will assist law enforcement in all criminal investigations by the allowing of the quick identification of suspect vehicles while eliminating non-suspect vehicles.

While opponents cite the cost of new license plates, the reality is that the timing could not be better. Massachusetts has for years have been struggling with the issue of replacing some of the oldest and hardest to read license plates in the United States. The cost to Massachusetts tax payers increases each year in false readings by License plate readers while travelers of the Massachusetts Turnpike frequently receive false citations caused solely by the poor quality of our states old license plates.

This is the perfect time to issue new license plates state wide. The Registry of Motor Vehicles, Law Enforcement and other officials have for years advocated replacing the old green license plates. The state has recently allocated funds to upgrade and improve the RMV's computer system which would easily be able to handle the new symbols. Although there would be a small upfront transition cost, the net result of income from the new license plates would produce a positive cash flow for the state.

*Arlington, Attleboro, Beverly, Boston, Brockton, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Fall River Fitchburg, Framingham, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, Massachusetts State Police, Medford, Methuen, New Bedford, Newton, Peabody, Pittsfield, Quincy, Revere, Salem, Somerville, Springfield, Taunton, Waltham, Weymouth, Woburn, Worcester*



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The proponents have worked for years in developing a legitimate proposal that is intended to save lives and improve law enforcements' ability to aid victims of crime. They have consistently addressed each and every question raised by state officials.

We strongly urge that this bill be reported out favorably by the Transportation Committee.

Thank you for your attention and consideration on this important matter regarding the safety of our children.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Steven A. Mazzie  
President, MMCC

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