

WILLIAM J. CARSON, Jr.
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
28th District



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

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House Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee Meeting

1.15.20

Chair Carson called the meeting to order at 2:42 p.m. Members present included Reps. Cooke, Brady, Bush, Briggs King, Osienski, Vanderwende, Smyk, and Morris. For a list of guests present, please see the attendance list below.

Chair Carson introduced **HB 262, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 21 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES.**

Chair Carson explained that the bill came from the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and closes the loop on which vehicles may apply for specialty tags.

Chair Carson opened the floor for public comment.

Seeing no questions from the committee or the public, Chair Carson requested a motion.

A motion was made by Rep. Brady and seconded by Rep. Briggs King to release HB 262 from committee; motion carried. Yes=8 (Carson, Cooke, Brady, Osienski, Briggs King, Morris, Smyk, and Vanderwende); No=0; Absent=1 (Bush). HB 262 was released from committee with a F=9, M=0, U=0 vote.

Chair Carson introduced **HB 264, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 9 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO NEW CASTLE COUNTY PROPERTY TAX RATES AND MUNICIPALITIES.**

Rep. Baumbach, the prime sponsor, explained the bill came into fruition as a result of the recommendations of the Local Service Functions Task Force created by House Concurrent Resolution No. 54.

Rep. Baumbach noted that the bill affects New Castle County only and that New Castle County government and the executive branch participated in drafting the legislation. He further noted that New Castle County Council remained non-participatory in the process due to an outstanding lawsuit.

Rep. Baumbach made clear that the bill would solve the lawsuit dispute and that the bill was unanimously approved by all participating stakeholders.

Rep. Baumbach explained that New Castle County pays over \$3 million per year towards fire companies, which prompted the question on how to charge residents for that expense. He also explained that there are discrepancies regarding municipal contributions.

Rep. Baumbach stressed the importance of passing the bill immediately, so that it is incorporated in the upcoming fiscal year for when the county needs to be doing its budget on March 1st.

Chair Carson opened the floor for public comment.

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Rick Armitage, representing the City of Newark, explained that Newark was one of the municipalities affected by the interpretation of Delaware code in the past and thanked everyone working on the bill. He expressed his support for the bill and asked it to be released from committee.

Executive Manager, Warren Jones, of the Delaware Volunteer Fireman's Association, stated his lack of understanding of the bill, but with the help of New Castle County colleagues he arrived at the conclusion that he favored the bill moving along.

Vicki Ford, of the New Castle County Office of Finance, stated the bill would allow the county to utilize a fair approach when calculating the tax rate for its municipal residents, specifically in the area of municipalities that provide donations to the local fire companies. She further stated that those residents would benefit from this bill and voiced the county's support.

Chair Carson requested a motion.

A motion was made by Rep. Brady and seconded by Rep. Smyk to release HB 264 from committee; motion carried. Yes=8 (Carson, Cooke, Brady, Osienski, Briggs King, Morris, Smyk, and Vanderwende); No=0; Absent=1 (Bush). HB 264 was released from committee with a F=9, M=0, U=0 vote.

Chair Carson introduced **HB 281, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 21 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO REPORTS OF ACCIDENTS.**

Speaker Schwartzkopf, the prime sponsor, explained that the bill raises the minimum amount of reportable accidents from \$500 to \$2,000. He also explained that the bill increases the minimum amount of property damage requiring police investigation from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Speaker Schwartzkopf noted that the bill brings Delaware to a more consistent level with other states and reflects the legislature's intentions in 1997 to increase the amount annually by \$100.

Rep. Osienski inquired about how the bill would affect insurance claims since claims often utilize a report.

Speaker Schwartzkopf reiterated that the bill raises the minimum amount of reportable accidents from \$500 to \$2,000 and the minimum amount of property damage requiring police investigation from \$1,000 to \$2,000. He also stated the bill does not interfere with the insurance claims process.

Chair Carson opened the floor for public comment.

Laird Stabler, representing State Farm, stated that he was cautiously optimistic that his organization would have no problem with the proposed legislation. His only concern was that the minimum amount of \$2,000 is too high.

Speaker Schwartzkopf assured Mr. Stabler that the bill would not be placed on the agenda until further review.

Rebecca Kidner, on behalf of American Property Casualty Insurance Association, stated that her organization is still reviewing the legislation and out of an abundance of caution would like more time to review it.

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Speaker Schwartzkopf also assured Mrs. Kidner that the bill would not be added to the agenda.

Chair Carson requested a motion.

A motion was made by Rep. Brady and seconded by Rep. Briggs King to release HB 281 from committee; motion carried. Yes=9 (Carson, Cooke, Brady, Osienski, Briggs King, Morris, Smyk, Vanderwende, and Bush); No=0; Absent=0. HB 281 was released from committee with a F=4, M=5, U=0 vote.

Chair Carson introduced **HB 280, AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 21 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES.**

Speaker Schwartzkopf explained the bill creates a special license plate for WWII veterans. He stressed the importance of bringing this bill to the floor since there are few veterans left from WWII, and they deserve this token of gratitude.

Chair Carson opened the floor for public comment.

Seeing no questions from the committee or the public, Chair Carson requested a motion.

A motion was made by Rep. Brady and seconded by Rep. Briggs King to release HB 281 from committee; motion carried. Yes=9 (Carson, Cooke, Brady, Osienski, Briggs King, Morris, Smyk, Vanderwende, and Bush); No=0; Absent=0. HB 280 was released from committee with a F=3, M=5, U=0 vote.

Chair Carson adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paul Ayala

Speaker List

Rick Armitage — Legislative Liaison, City of Newark

Warren Jones — Delaware Volunteer Fireman's Association

Vicki Ford — New Castle County Office of Finance

Laird Stabler — Legislative Liaison, State Farm

Rebecca Kidner — Legislative Liaison, Rebecca Batson Kidner P.A.