

Alaska State Legislature
SENATOR CATHY TILTON



SENATE DISTRICT M

Sponsor Statement:

Senate Bill 239

(34-LS1371A)

Currently, Alaska is an outlier in the nation, enforcing a static and outdated barrier that prevents Alaskans from fully enjoying the benefits of federal importation laws. While the United States government recognizes the historical and cultural value of vehicles over 25 years old by allowing their legal importation, Alaska's administrative code remains stuck in the year 1981.

Under federal law (49 U.S.C. §30112(b)(9)), vehicles that are at least 25 years old are exempt from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) for the purpose of importation. This "rolling" standard acknowledges that once a vehicle reaches a quarter-century in age, it is considered a classic or collector's item.

However, Alaska's Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) currently operates under 2 AAC 92.020, which requires any vehicle manufactured in **1981 or newer** to possess a permanently affixed FMVSS certification label to be registered for roadway use. This creates a significant conflict:

- **Federal Rule:** A 1998 vehicle is legally imported and recognized as a classic.
- **Alaska Rule:** That same 1998 vehicle is ineligible for a standard title or registration because it is "newer than 1981" and lacks a U.S. safety sticker that did not exist for foreign-market cars.

Alaska is currently grouped with states like California and Rhode Island as one of the most difficult jurisdictions for automotive enthusiasts. By maintaining a static 1981 cutoff, we are effectively telling Alaskans that they cannot drive federally legal, 25-year-old collector vehicles that are enjoyed by citizens in almost every other state.

This legislation aligns Alaska's registration requirements with the federal 25-year rolling exemption. Specifically, it is time to modernize our statutes to reflect federal reality. This bill removes an unnecessary bureaucratic hurdle and ensures that Alaskans have the same rights as other Americans to own and operate classic imported vehicles.

I urge your support for this common-sense update to our vehicle registration laws.

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