

**House File 2678 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 2678

BY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 2607)

(SUCCESSOR TO HSB 610)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act relating to vehicles, including the initial registration  
2 and issuance of certificate of title by certain county  
3 treasurers and the definitions of terms for purposes of  
4 motor vehicle franchisers, and providing fees.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 321.20, subsection 4, Code 2024, is  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 4. Notwithstanding [this section](#) or any other provision of  
4 law to the contrary, ~~if the program required by subsection~~  
5 ~~2 is not implemented by July 1, 2019,~~ an owner of a vehicle  
6 subject to registration or a lessor of a vehicle pursuant to  
7 chapter 321F that is subject to registration and has a gross  
8 vehicle weight of less than ten thousand pounds, may apply  
9 to the county treasurer of a county contiguous to the county  
10 designated for the owner under [subsection 1](#) for the initial  
11 registration and issuance of a certificate of title. However,  
12 any reference in this chapter to the county where a vehicle  
13 is registered or the county where a certificate of title was  
14 issued shall be deemed to refer to the applicable county  
15 described in subsection 1, regardless of which county treasurer  
16 received application for and issued the initial registration  
17 and certificate of title under this subsection. The fee for  
18 submitting an application under this subsection is one dollar,  
19 which is in addition to any other fee provided by law.

20 Sec. 2. Section 321.166, subsection 2, Code 2024, is amended  
21 to read as follows:

22 2. Every registration plate or pair of plates shall display  
23 a registration plate number which shall consist of alphabetical  
24 or numerical characters or a combination thereof and the name  
25 of this state, which may be abbreviated. Every registration  
26 plate issued by the county treasurer shall display the name  
27 of the county, including any plate issued pursuant to section  
28 321.34, except Pearl Harbor and purple heart registration  
29 plates issued prior to January 1, 1997; ~~and~~ collegiate,  
30 fire fighter, and medal of honor registration plates; and  
31 regular registration plates issued pursuant to section  
32 321.20, subsection 4. Special truck registration plates shall  
33 display the word "special". The department may adopt rules to  
34 implement [this subsection](#).

35 Sec. 3. Section 322A.1, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2024,

1 is amended to read as follows:

2 ~~When~~ The following words and phrases when used in this  
3 chapter shall, unless the context otherwise requires for  
4 the purpose of this chapter, have the meanings respectively  
5 ascribed to them:

6 EXPLANATION

7 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
8 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

9 Under current law, a person must generally apply for vehicle  
10 registration and issuance of certificate of title to the county  
11 treasurer where the person resides or where the primary users  
12 of the vehicle are located. However, in 2016, the general  
13 assembly required the department of transportation (DOT) to  
14 develop and implement, by January 1, 2018, a program to allow  
15 for electronic applications, titling, registering, and funds  
16 transfers for vehicles subject to registration (program) in  
17 order to improve the efficiency and timeliness of the processes  
18 and to reduce costs for all parties involved. At the same  
19 time, the general assembly conditionally authorized an owner  
20 of a vehicle subject to registration to apply to the county  
21 treasurer of a county contiguous to the county designated for  
22 the owner if the DOT had not yet implemented the program by  
23 January 1, 2018. In 2018, the general assembly amended the  
24 program implementation date to July 1, 2019.

25 This bill authorizes a lessor of a vehicle pursuant to Code  
26 chapter 321F (leasing and renting of vehicles), if such vehicle  
27 is subject to registration and has a gross vehicle weight of  
28 less than 10,000 pounds, to apply for initial registration  
29 and issuance of certificate of title in a contiguous county.  
30 The bill does not make corresponding changes. Instead, for  
31 all registration and certificate of title actions provided or  
32 required in Code chapter 321 (motor vehicles and law of the  
33 road) other than initial registrations and certificates of  
34 title issued in a contiguous county, references to the county  
35 where a vehicle is registered or the county where a certificate

1 of title was issued are deemed to refer to the appropriate  
2 county under current law. The bill requires an applicant for  
3 initial registration and issuance of certificate of title to  
4 pay a \$1 application fee if the application is submitted in a  
5 contiguous county. The fee is in addition to any other fee  
6 provided by law.

7 Current law requires registration plates to display the  
8 name of the county that issues the plates, unless a specific  
9 exception is provided. The bill specifies such an exception  
10 for regular registration plates issued pursuant to the bill.

11 The bill removes the context clause applicable to defined  
12 terms in Code chapter 322A (motor vehicle franchisers). In  
13 2022, the Iowa supreme court relied on the context clause  
14 included in Code section 322A.1 to apply an alternate  
15 definition of "community" than how "community" is defined in  
16 Code chapter 322A (Sioux City Truck Sales, Inc. v. Iowa Dept.  
17 of Transportation, 975 N.W.2d 333 (Iowa 2022)). The bill  
18 provides the same introduction to defined words and phrases to  
19 Code chapter 322A as is used for Code chapter 321.