

February 10, 2009

Hon. Senator Michael Katz  
P.O. Box 1401  
Dover, DE 19903

Hon. Representative Deborah Hudson  
1022 Oriente Ave.  
Wilmington, DE 19807

Dear Senator Katz and Representative Hudson,

My name is Austin Osborne and I am a sophomore at the Charter School of Wilmington. I am also a student driver in the State of Delaware who recently received his permit. Although much of my experience has been enjoyable, as well as educational, I would like to offer an observation about the student driver program. While driving with one of my parents, I would often come to an area to which I was not accustomed, and naturally, I would slow down. This would irk other drivers to the point they would shout, honk their horn or make menacing gestures. The same occurs when I make any type of mistake. Tension such as this puts too much pressure on a student driver and probably results in more driving hazards than necessary.

I researched the Internet and discovered that my student driver experiences were not unique. Many people across the United States are concerned about this issue. (Please refer to the enclosed articles which I have enclosed as well as articles proposing appropriate student driver signage).

I would like to propose that the State of Delaware consider using a sticker/magnet for student drivers which would be placed on the rear of the car for all drivers to see. I feel this would make the road much safer for everyone, student drivers and veterans alike. I could never understand why the training vehicle specified that a student driver was behind the wheel, but a week later, driving in an unmarked vehicle, there was no indication of lack of experience. Driving in the training car was totally different because other drivers were put on notice of the presence of a student driver and tended to be more patient and forgiving. In fact, my dad had a prototype magnet designed for our vehicle. The first thing I noticed was that drivers seemed less inclined to tailgate. This factor alone made getting behind the wheel less stressful.

There are entrepreneurs who have designed and marketed their own decals and given the current state of our economy the state may be hesitant to initiate a program that may generate additional taxpayer expense. Safety, however, demands a more comprehensive approach than



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relying on an individual's sense of safety or willingness to purchase a magnet/sticker. Because this legislation would protect all who use Delaware's roads, I believe the State should consider adding a nominal charge/deposit to the cost of the permit which will also defray costs for the magnet/decal. If the magnet/sticker is not returned to the DMV when the Class D driver's license is obtained, the deposit is retained by the State. This way, stickers can be recycled through student drivers. (I like to consider myself environmentally friendly).

I would be excited to see Delaware take the lead in this all-important legislation that would make Delaware a better and safer place to live.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am available to answer any questions, comments or concerns you may have.

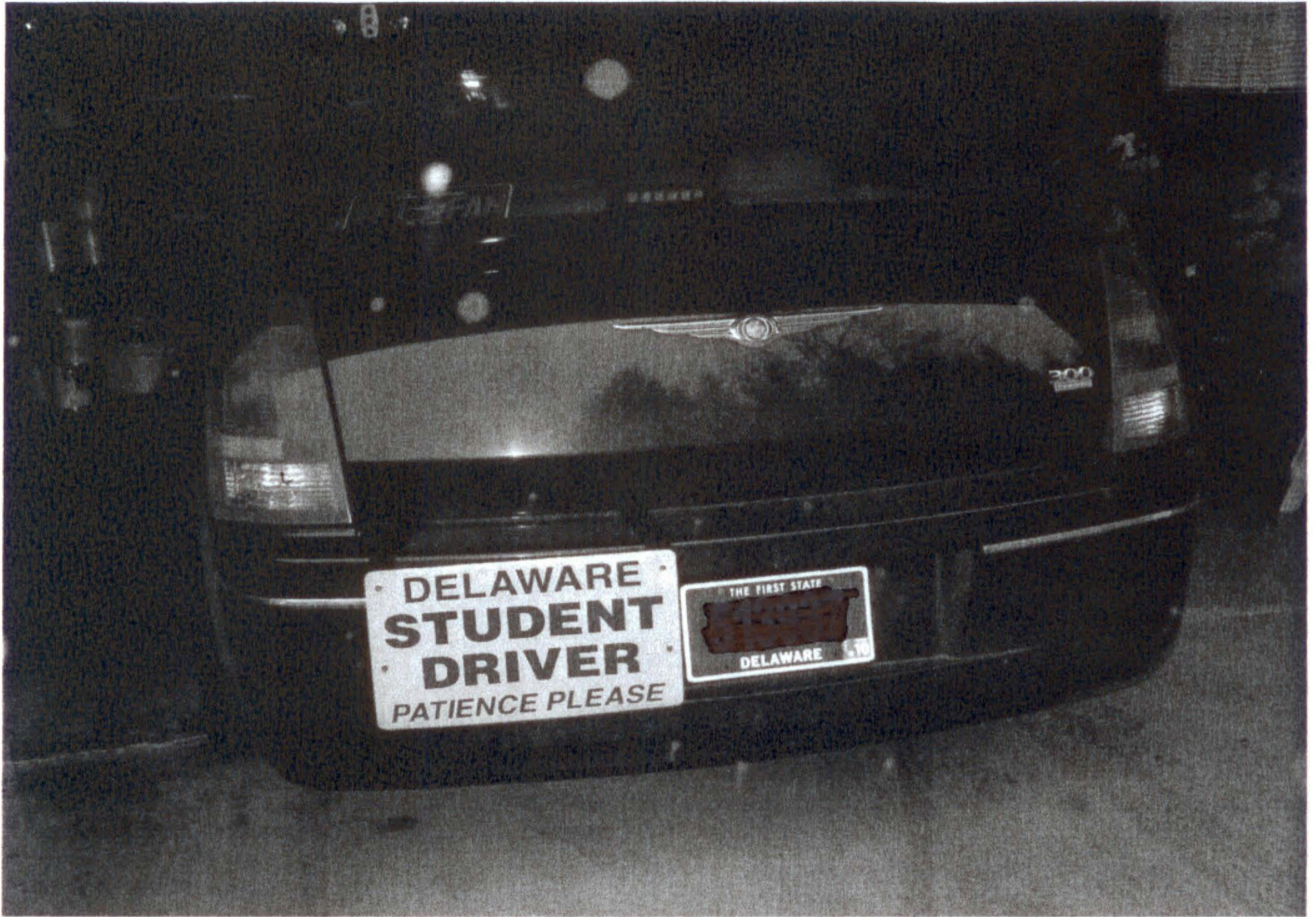
Sincerely,



J. Austin Osborne

Enclosures









STATE OF DELAWARE  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
800 BAY ROAD  
P.O. Box 778  
DOVER, DELAWARE 19903

CAROLANN WICKS, P.E.  
SECRETARY

April 30, 2009

J. Austin Osborne  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Wilmington, Delaware 19807

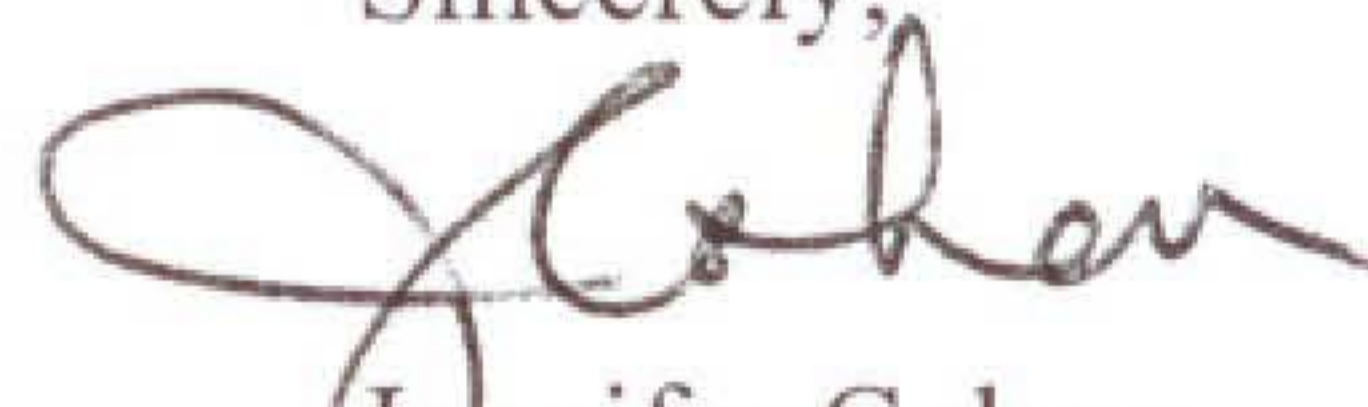
Dear Mr. Osborne:

Thank you for your interest and concern for the safety of Delaware Graduated Driver License (GDL) holders. Representative Hudson passed your request to the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for our consideration. In considering your proposal, I can understand why you feel having an identifier on the back of a car would make other drivers more aware of novice drivers, and thus increase highway safety. Unfortunately, many share the opposite concern that you have, and feel an identifier of this sort could make them a target for harassment. These opposing opinions are the reasons why DMV is not in favor of mandating this requirement.

I want to make you aware that the DMV along with Office of Highway Safety and other Delaware organizations will soon launch many initiatives aimed at making teen drivers safer on the road. One initiative to be rolled is offering "Novice Driver" stickers/magnets to GDL holders to place on the back of their car. These reflective stickers/magnets will be optional to all GDL applicants so they or their parents can make the decision of whether or not they want to be identified.

There will be a press conference held at Smyrna High School on Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm for the roll out of our *Delaware Does More for Teen Drivers* campaign and I would like to invite you to attend. Again, thank you for your interest and I hope to see you at the event.

Sincerely,

  
Jennifer Cohan  
Director, DMV

JC:vm

cc: State Representative Deborah D. Hudson  
State Senator Michael Katz

Osborne/file