



January 20, 2021

The Honorable Hubert Vo
Texas House of Representatives
District 149
7474 South Kirkwood #106
Houston, Texas 77072

Re: Implementation Update for House Bill (HB) 2310, enacted by the 86th Legislative Session

Dear Representative Vo:

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) are actively working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to implement HB 2310 and want to provide you an update of our progress. Together, our agencies have conducted several conference calls to develop a solution and discuss implementation efforts. We have also worked with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) to seek a solution that can be used consistently nationwide.

When vehicles are damaged or destroyed in a disaster, the owner may be eligible for repair or replacement funds under FEMA's Individual Assistance Program. There is currently no ability to track these vehicles to ensure their condition is reported to TxDMV, thus preventing TxDMV from reporting them to the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) as required by federal law. Reporting to NMVTIS protects consumers from fraud and unsafe vehicles.

A key consideration in developing a solution to implement HB 2310 is knowing that FEMA does not currently collect the VIN of damaged vehicles in a manner that can easily be shared with TxDMV. To collect individual VINs, FEMA would require TxDMV staff to review each application for individual assistance to identify the VIN, if it was captured. This is a time consuming and costly effort that is not viable. Due to this, a potential long-term solution and a potential short-term solution was proposed to FEMA.

The ideal solution for the long-term includes FEMA collecting the VIN of vehicles damaged or destroyed in a disaster in a manner that can be electronically shared with TxDMV. This solution provides an automated method for identifying these vehicles without impacting the individual trying to obtain assistance from FEMA. This would also allow TxDMV to efficiently update the title record and pass the data onto NMVTIS. The challenge with the ideal solution is FEMA would have to program their system and change the application process to collect the VIN. FEMA is unable to make the necessary changes at this time; therefore, a short-term approach is being implemented while a long-term approach is considered.

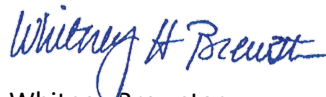
Page 2

The Honorable Hubert Vo
January 20, 2021

The short-term solution being implemented is for FEMA to require the vehicle owner to provide proof that an application for a salvage or nonrepairable title had been submitted to TxDMV prior to obtaining funds to repair or replace the vehicle. Requiring proof an application has been submitted to TxDMV ensures the appropriate title type with any necessary brands will be issued for the vehicle and enables TxDMV to report the information to NMVTIS. This solution documents the appropriate condition of the vehicle, ensuring potential purchasers can make an informed decision by knowing the vehicle's condition. This solution will be implemented more quickly, but requires customers to take the extra step of making application for a salvage or nonrepairable title prior to receiving assistance from FEMA.

Our agencies are committed to providing assistance to Texas citizens during times of natural disaster while also protecting against fraud and unsafe vehicles. If you would like to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the TxDMV executive office at 512-465-3001 or Caroline Love, TxDMV Director of Government and Strategic Communications Division at Caroline.Love@txdmv.gov or 512-465-1484.

Sincerely,



Whitney Brewster
Executive Director
Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
4000 Jackson Avenue
Austin, Texas 78731



W. Nim Kidd
Chief
Texas Department of Emergency Management
P.O. Box 15467
Austin, Texas 78761