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H.B. 5102



Connecticut Council of Car Clubs
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17 Mullen Road
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March 1, 2013

Planning and Development Committee
Room 2100, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Subject: Opposition to House Bill 5102, "An Act Establishing a State-Wide Mill Rate for Motor Vehicles and Amending the Definition of Antique, Rare or Special Interest Motor Vehicle."

Dear State Senator/Representative:

The Connecticut Council of Car Clubs (4C's) is an association of approximately 35 Connecticut Car Clubs that monitors legislation in the state. We represent on the order of 2000 antique automotive hobbyists in the state. The 4C's Board of Directors is comprised of volunteer automotive hobbyists.

The 4C's is opposed to the portion of House Bill 5102 that raises the maximum assessed value of an antique, rare or special interest motor vehicle from \$500 to \$2500. We believe the proposed change is not warranted considering that antique automotive hobbyists already pay their fair share of property taxes on the other motor vehicles we use as primary transportation. Also, the proposed change is not warranted considering the significant benefits the hobby provides to the community and business in the state.

Antique automotive hobbyists in this state have modern motor vehicles that are used as primary transportation. These vehicles are subject to the same property taxes that everyone else in the state pays. Because of this, antique automotive hobbyists are already paying their fair share of property taxes on motor vehicles. Antique motor vehicles are well-maintained, infrequently operated hobby cars and deserving of continued property tax benefits. Other hobbies, such as artwork, antique furniture, stamps, coins, rare books, home theater systems, jewelry, sports collectibles, etc. are not currently and should not be subject to taxation. Increasing the maximum property tax assessment of antique, rare or special interest motor vehicles would unfairly put the antique automotive hobbyists in a situation where the tax burden associated with their hobby would be excessive, as compared to other hobbies.

In addition, the antique automotive hobbyist provides benefits to the community that many other hobbies don't provide. There are several car shows each weekend in the state throughout the late spring, summer, and early fall. These car shows occur in numerous municipalities throughout the state, including East Hampton, Manchester, Middletown, New Britain, Norwich, Southbury, Stafford Springs, and Stratford. These car shows benefit local charities and organizations. These shows result in significant revenues to these charities and organizations. In addition to car shows on the weekends, there are cruise nights in Connecticut on every weeknight throughout the late spring, summer, and early fall. Cruise nights occur in many municipalities throughout the state, including

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East Granby, Hamden, New London, and Westport. These car shows and cruise nights result in increased spending at restaurants and local business throughout the state, indirectly helping increase state revenues. Additionally, the use of antique autos in local parades and other town functions throughout the state provide a positive benefit to the community. Increasing the assessed value of an antique, rare or special interest motor vehicle would have an adverse impact on the antique automotive hobby that provides these significant benefits to the state.

Increasing the taxes on an antique auto will cause the Connecticut antique auto hobbyist to reconsider whether we could afford to maintain our existing antique cars and/or restore additional cars. The antique auto hobby supports an entire industry in the state that relies on the revenue generated by the restoration and maintenance of antique vehicles. These businesses are located throughout the state, including East Windsor, Fairfield, Old Saybrook, Portland, and Westbrook. Section 3 of House Bill 5102 is adverse to those businesses that the antique auto hobby supports. These businesses create and maintain jobs that are vital in these difficult economic times. Those jobs could be threatened if House Bill 5102 is enacted.

Based on the above, the Connecticut Council of Car Clubs is strongly opposed to the provision of House Bill 5102 that proposes to increase the maximum assessed value of an antique, rare or special interest motor vehicle from \$500 to \$2500.

House Bill 5102 also proposes to increase the minimum age of an antique, rare or special interest vehicle from 20 to 30 years. The Connecticut Council of Car Clubs would prefer that the minimum age of an antique, rare or special interest motor vehicle not be changed. It is not clear that any benefit associated with increasing the minimum age from 20 to 30 years outweighs the potential burden hobbyists that currently own vehicles between 20 and 30 years old may encounter having to reregister their motor vehicles. Currently, the state statutes allow the DMV to issue special number plates (or antique plates) to antique, rare or special interest motor vehicles greater than 20 years old. If the minimum age is changes to 30 years, it is not clear whether those motor vehicles with special number plates would be "grandfathered" or they need to turn those plates in and reregister their motor vehicles with a different plate. The hobby would be more receptive to this proposed change if current vehicles with special number plates are not required to reregister their motor vehicles.

The 4C's respectfully requests that the Planning and Development Committee delete the portion of House Bill 5102 that increases the assessed value for an antique, rare or special interest motor vehicle from \$500 to \$2500. Additionally, if the Committee feels it necessary to raise the age of an antique, rare or special interest motor vehicle from 20 to 30 years, then we request that consideration be given to allowing 20 to 30 year old antique, rare or special interest motor vehicles that currently have special number plates to continue to utilize them.

Very Truly Yours,



Dave Bajumpaa
Connecticut Council of Car Clubs