

Thornburgh vetoes proposal to require license photos

HARRISBURG — Gov. Dick Thornburgh last Friday vetoed legislation dealing with drivers' license photographs and automobile emission standards, saying it would "waste money, facilitate fraud, place this Commonwealth in violation of federal law and jeopardize much needed federal highway funds."

House Bill 739 would have made several changes in the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code. The governor's objections, however, were directed at the two sections relating to drivers' licenses and automobile pollution inspections.

The first would have prohibited the state from implementing its long-planned shift to a license that includes a photograph of the driver. The General Assembly ordered that shift three years ago.

Thornburgh said "an eleventh hour reversal of that decision would waste more than a million dollars in taxpayers' money already spent on this legislatively-

directed program, expose the Commonwealth to expensive and damaging civil litigation, and deny us a valuable tool, as a society, in fighting crime and commercial fraud."

At an annual cost of 37 cents per driver, Thornburgh said, the program "will facilitate commercial transactions, aid in identification for law enforcement purposes . . . and provide identification for Senior Citizens' mass transit and other benefit programs."

"The photographs," Thornburgh said, "will make it much more difficult for pickpockets, muggers and other thieves to misuse the licenses of law-abiding Pennsylvanians."

The governor said some earlier objections to the plan have been answered administratively. The photographs, for example, will be made in easily accessible local public facilities, rather than in private offices.

The plan is scheduled to be implemented in early 1980.

The other section prompting the governor's veto would have delayed implementation of an automobile pollution inspection program mandated by federal law.

Under the provisions of a federal court consent decree, agreed to by the Shapp Administration, the Commonwealth is obliged to begin automobile emission inspections in the Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Scranton/Wilkes-Barre areas in the fall of 1980.

The state legislation Thornburgh vetoed purported to delay the automobile inspection program beyond the deadlines mandated by the court order.

"This action would expose Pennsylvania to the immediate threat of contempt of court proceedings and loss of federal highway funds and water and sewage grants," Thornburgh said.

This year the Commonwealth expects to receive approximately \$400 million in federal funds from those programs.

"Not only that," Thornburgh said, "but failure to substantially reduce automobile pollution could retard industrial growth, cost us jobs and discourage the use of coal as an energy source in Pennsylvania."

The governor explained that every particle of pollution released into the air by an automobile is one

less particle that federal authorities will allow a steel mill or coal-fired power plant to release.

"It obviously is in our long-range best interest," Thornburgh said, "to minimize pollution from those sources that are least vital to our economic and energy needs."

The governor added, however, that "I am not

unmindful of the serious questions the General Assembly has raised, in Senate Resolution 73 and concurrent Resolution 222, concerning this program and the court-ordered consent decree mandating its implementation."

"I have therefore initiated discussions between the appropriate federal and state authorities regarding

those questions, and I have directed the Attorney General, the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Environmental Resources to review the consent agreement I intend to seek, within the law, any adjustments that would appear to be in the best interest of all Pennsylvanians."

It can pay to ignore alfalfa eating pests

UNIVERSITY PARK — Sometimes it pays to just ignore those pesky alfalfa weevil and potato leaf hoppers.

A point exists where it costs more to control than to just leave them alone. This point referred to as the economic threshold is the subject of an insect management program developed by Stanley Gesell, extension entomologist at Penn State.

The program provides growers with the necessary tools to take the guesswork out of when or when not to spray.

Alfalfa plants withstand some pest damage before spraying is profitable. Damage by the pest needs to be at least equal to the cost of control measures before a

farmer can obtain any benefits from spray applications. In many fields, as in the 1979 growing season, this level of damage may never be reached. Thus the farmer spends nothing on control measures.

For a grower to obtain optimum production, he must know the level of infestation in relation to height and maturity of the crops.

Damage from the alfalfa weevil occurs any time from late April to June. Weevil damage is usually confined to the first cutting and the new regrowth of the second crop.

Monitoring a field involves the random selection of 30 alfalfa stems from 30 sites throughout the field. The number of larvae compared to the height of the plants

determine if spray is necessary. If the predicted damage is less than the cost of insecticide, costs will exceed the loss and not be profitable.

Like the alfalfa weevil, the economic injury level for the potato leafhopper is based on predicted loss by making 20 sweeps in each of five sites with an insect net. Again the number of adults compared with the height of the plants determines whether any control action is necessary.

In Pennsylvania, the average savings in 1979 amounted to approximately twenty dollars per acre for those farmers using the insect management plan according to Gesell. This was because samplings indicated that no control measures were necessary.

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