



# Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor

Department of Transportation

Director's Office  
355 Capitol St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**DATE:** February 5, 2014

**TO:** House Committee on Transportation and Economic Development

**FROM:** Tom McClellan, DMV Administrator  
Amy Joyce, Legislative Liaison

**SUBJECT:** HB 4047, Task Force on DMV Customer Service and Efficiency

## Introduction

House Bill 4047 would assemble a Task Force to study the efficiency of customer service provided by the Department of Transportation, Driver and Motor Vehicle Services Division (DMV) in its field offices. The bill directs the group to study several specific elements and to identify benchmarks to measure success in achieving customer service outcomes. Recommended changes and benchmarks are to be given to the Director of ODOT.

## Discussion

Oregon's DMV operates 60 field offices throughout the state. Twelve offices have more than 10 employees and are located in high population areas with large volumes of customers. Other offices have only a few employees, are in very small communities, and have a relatively small customer volume. DMV also operates four satellite offices that are open only once per week or even once per month, so that more remote communities have closer access to a field office. DMV transacts a great deal of customer business through the mail, by phone, and via the internet. Most people can conduct their DMV business without entering a field office, except for renewing their driver license or ID card once every eight years.

DMV has taken many measures to improve customer service and efficiency. Many years ago DMV proposed, and the legislature approved, increasing the time a driver license is valid from four years to eight years. A similar change extended the initial registration period for new vehicles to four years instead of two. Recently, DMV authorized a waiver of behind-the-wheel tests for teens completing an ODOT-approved Driver Education course and its rigorous practical exam.

For many years, Oregon State University researchers have conducted monthly customer service surveys of people who visit DMV field offices. The surveys are sent randomly, and the customer response rates typically exceed 35%. DMV asks for feedback on employee helpfulness, employee knowledge, and other factors. The survey provides opportunity for written comments, which are collected and sorted by topic for analysis of DMV's performance. The rate of customers who are satisfied or very satisfied with these DMV field office factors routinely exceeds 80%. Customers who prepare with information from the internet or by calling a phone agent tend to complete their transaction in one visit, which increases satisfaction. Call wait times consistently average less than one minute before talking to a live person.

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The management and staff of Oregon's DMV recognize they are the face of state government because nearly every Oregonian interacts with DMV at some point. DMV accepts that role with pride. DMV welcomes the opportunity to broaden the scope of feedback from the communities we serve. While our employees are proud of the customer service we provide, and the survey data supports that pride in our work, DMV is constantly striving to improve and we appreciate the ideas of others. Suggestions from the Task Force may touch on increased use of the internet to reduce customer visits, a need for additional staff to reduce wait times, investments in computer upgrades and technical innovation, and other improvements.

The bill brings together members of the general public who use DMV, as well as the trucking industry and vehicle dealers, both of which have heightened use of DMV services. These diverse customers, each with different needs and perspectives, can provide feedback to inform operational decisions. However, it may be worthwhile to consider membership from outside Marion County, and the study of offices outside the mid-Willamette Valley as well. The DMV experience in remote areas of the state, or the Portland metro area, can be quite different.

While the bill specifically calls out the study of customer service and efficiency in the field offices, DMV suggests that the information sought and used by the Task Force include the other DMV service delivery methods – phone, mail, and internet – because they heavily impact the customer volume and customer experience in the field offices. DMV also recommends that the Task Force consider issues of budget, positions/FTE, and the fees set in statute to raise money for the Highway Fund. DMV has reduced its workforce by 8% while in the same period absorbed an 8% increase in the number of driver license and vehicle registration customers served. DMV, like most of state government, is expected to do more with less.

### **Summary**

Our agency welcomes the opportunity to inform a group of customers and officials about DMV operations and the quality with which we deliver services to Oregonians. DMV stands ready to assist the Task Force, and looks forward to any recommendations the group may suggest to achieve greater efficiencies and improve customer service experiences.