

March 17, 2024

To Whom it May Concern.

Re: Titling of old vehicles in ND

We are writing this letter with the hope that laws, procedures, and practices related to titling of old vintage, to be restored, untitled vehicles can be modified. We want to share our experience with someone who has the authority or power to initiate change for a process that is possible to accomplish by the owners of vintage vehicles and taxpayers of ND.

For twenty plus years I, Thomas, owned TAC Radiator in Minot, ND (1975-1997). I have always loved, owned, and restored vintage vehicles my entire life. When I was in the business of radiator repair, one of my primary customers were farmers/ranchers. Hundreds of times over the twenty plus years, I would purchase old vehicles that these customers had parked in their tree rows. Also, just prior to purchasing the Radiator Shop, we purchased a 20-acre farmstead that had approximately 30 vintage vehicles in a tree row. Many of these vehicles had no titles available from the owners.

Over the years I transported these vehicles to a 10-acre piece of land that I purchased. Every time I needed a title for one of these vehicles to restore, I would contact the ND Highway Patrol and they would come to this location and complete paperwork that allowed me to obtain a title for the vehicle. This continued for years.

Then, approximately fifteen years ago (estimate), I was told that I needed a substantial amount of paperwork completed certifying why I did not have a title. I also needed to have an Auto Repair Shop registered with the Secretary of State that would certify that the vehicle was road worthy and safe to drive. I had to include a copy of the firm's Secretary of State certificate and several VIN checks to show there was no existing title on file. Of course, this all came at a cost to me.

Shortly before I turned 80 and was having numerous health problems and I determined I was never going to restore the hundreds of vehicles I owned. My spouse, son and I decided there were a select few we could restore, and the rest were desirable to old car buffs, and I should sell these vehicles. My spouse contacted the DOT to determine what was needed. She learned all the forms that were needed were nearly the same as the last time we followed this procedure, with only some more recently dated forms from DOT. We chose approximately fifteen of the vehicles to title and sell. We hired the repair garage owner and paid him to come and look at the vehicles and fill out the certifications at a cost of \$100 per vehicle. We submitted all the required paperwork.

After many weeks of waiting, we received a letter that stated the law had changed during the interim period from start to finish; that required me to obtain a court order that

I owned these vehicles! My spouse phoned ND MVD/DOT and talked to a supervisor. She was told there was nothing she could do, and they needed a court order. So, we hired an attorney. We did a significant amount of writing for the court and to tell my story. Then waited months for a court order for these fifteen vehicles. My cost..... just shy of \$2,000. I estimate this took approximately six months of time from start to finish.

We then prepared all new documents and submitted them with the proper fees and the court order. We waited weeks and then my spouse phoned the NDDOT. She was informed they were weeks behind and it might be longer. When the person informed my spouse what dates she was working on, my spouse told her our paperwork was submitted weeks before that. She checked the files and said a letter went out to me on one of the vehicles many days before this call. She read the letter from the file and we were totally dismayed! Now, we were told I needed a licensed car dealership to come and look at the vehicle and certify that I had the correct value on each vehicle!

My spouse asked for a manager to inquire why we were not told this at the same time we were informed that we needed a court order saying I owned the vehicles. Again, we were told, "Sorry, but that is the law."

This occurred about a year ago and the DOT succeeded in wearing us down! I was so angry; I could not deal with it. Eventually all my documents were received back, but it was long after my phone call to DOT. So, I know by postmark they were still in that office when I phoned. I would ask that after going through all of this, someone with some authority allow me to obtain titles for these vehicles. Now at 81½ I still have friends who are alive that know I purchased all these vehicles more than twenty years ago and they are not concealed as stolen property. Additionally, you would certainly think that there would be some way to obtain titles on vehicles that are more than thirty years old that is not so overly burdensome, onerous, expensive and takes and extraordinary amount of time.

My hope is to find individual(s) who take an interest in this and can implement laws/procedures that are more reasonable that allow us to title vintage vehicles.

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