

Idaho Lawmaker and 'Vette Fan • Racing Tow Vehicle Tool

# DRIVING FORCE

Spring 2016 | [semaSAN.com](http://semaSAN.com)



***Everything Old  
Is New Again***

**Replica Market Revolutionized by Landmark Law**

# New Federal Law Offers More Choices on Replica Vehicles

**T**he year 2015 will be remembered for many things. For fans of classic cars, it represents the beginning of a new era. Thanks to a years-long effort by the SEMA Action Network (SAN), as well as the industry that supports us, the U.S. Congress passed a bill that will soon enable consumers to purchase turn-key replicas of classically styled vehicles. Signed by the president in December 2015, the new law (called the Low Volume Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Act) means enthusiasts now have the choice of purchasing a completed replica or building a vehicle from a kit.

The practice of recreating four-wheeled legends goes back generations. It first emerged in the '50s when the law of supply and demand began to have a dramatic impact. There were more enthusiasts wanting to buy cars from previous decades than existed in stock, making prices unaffordable for many. A solution, aided greatly by a new material called "fiberglass," allowed new look-alike bodies to be made rather inexpensively and placed on a newer frame. Kit cars allowed construction to occur in a hobbyist's garage. Popular kits have been crafted to evoke beloved antiques and sports cars, including early Auburns, Bugattis, Porsches and the offerings of Carroll Shelby, to name a few. Notably, these vehicles are commonly employed by film and television studios, when several "clones" are necessary to complete a production. For example, who can forget the 250GT SWB California Spyder

starring in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*? It was actually a high-quality replica inspired by the '61 Ferrari Modena Spider.

As a result of the new law, beginning in 2017, a small automaker will be able to sell up to 325 turn-key replicas that resemble the body of a motor vehicle produced at least 25 years ago. From the '60s until now, the United States had just one system for regulating automobiles. It was designed for companies that mass-produced millions of vehicles and not "low-volume" automakers. The law made it nearly impossible for small companies to sell turn-key cars since the federal government regulated these vehicles as if they were current model year vehicles, not vintage cars.

Replica cars have been marketed for decades as kits where a manufacturer sells car parts, frequently assembled, and the buyer installs the drivetrain (engine, transmission, etc.). Titling and registration for these finished cars are handled at the state level. In fact, thanks to another SAN-drafted law, many states already have registration and titling categories that allow replicas to be treated as the model year that they most closely resemble.

While this system has worked in many cases, it excluded those who didn't have the time or technical skills to complete a kit car. The new SAN-supported law protects and expands the kit-car market. "There is no change for hobbyists who want to assemble their own specially constructed vehicle from any era with the engine package of their choice," said SEMA Vice President of Government Affairs Steve

McDonald. "However, early next year, enthusiasts will have the option of buying a turn-key replica from the manufacturer. We believe that this law will have the added benefit of spurring automakers to market an even wider variety of unique automotive offerings."

Turn-key replicas will be subject to federal equipment standards (lighting, tires, windshields, brake hoses, etc.) but exempt from vehicle standards (roof crush, side impact, etc.). Nevertheless, the turn-key vehicles must meet current Clean Air Act emissions standards. This will be achieved by allowing the manufacturer to install a certified engine package from another current model year vehicle or a crate engine that has been certified by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The vehicles will then be permanently exempt from emissions testing.

Now that the bill has been enacted, the SAN is working with National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement the regulations that accompany the law. The agencies have until December 2016 to issue the regulations, allowing consumers to begin purchasing these vehicles in 2017. With less than a year until turn-key replicas are available in the marketplace, the countdown to own these fully functional tributes has begun. Most importantly, this landmark new law symbolizes the unprecedented result that can be achieved with purposeful strategy, an organized plan of attack and galvanized forces—all executed with precision tact and timing.



## Low Volume Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Act Q&A

**What is a “low volume” manufacturer?** A company whose annual worldwide production is not more than 5,000 motor vehicles each year. The company may sell up to 325 “replica” cars a year in the United States.

**How does the law define a replica vehicle?** A replica vehicle resembles the body of another motor vehicle produced at least 25 years ago. Examples: '30s Roadsters, '0s Willys, '60s Cobras and Mustangs and '80s DeLoreans.

**How will this law impact kit car buyers and builders?** Hobbyists will still have the freedom to assemble their own vehicle from a kit if they prefer, including modern-era and non-replica cars. The law simply provides another option for customers who may not have the time or skills to complete a kit car.

**When will replica cars be available?** The federal government has until December 2016 to draft regulations implementing the law. Sales should begin in early 2017.

**Will I be able to title/register the car?** SAN has worked with many states to establish specific categories for titling, registering and regulating replicas and specially constructed vehicles, which will also apply to turn-key replicas. The laws in many states allow these vehicles to be registered and titled by the model year of the production vehicle they replicate. For more information on the laws in your state, visit the “Titling & Registration” page on [www.semasan.com](http://www.semasan.com).



## CAUCUS CONNECTION

# Corvette Fever in the Gem State

## Senator Jim Patrick

Idaho Senator Jim Patrick is a certifiable car guy. Born in Twin Falls, Idaho, and with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Idaho, Patrick has been a member of the Idaho State Legislature since 2006. He's a Chevy Corvette man all the way. While he's owned many 'Vettes, including an '09, an '04 and a '76, he has a special affinity for his '14, which took eight months to acquire but is in his words “built the best.”

Senator Patrick and his grandson Dustin are regular guests to the annual SEMA Show in Las Vegas. He doesn't think he'll ever see the entire trade show, even though he's given it his best effort. “There's so much more to it than the cars,” he says. “I'm equally impressed by the vast array of innovative products and project builds and I enjoy meeting the professionals behind them.”

He also enjoys the friendships he's made with other members of the SEMA-supported State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus. Members of this caucus of car-crazy legislators attend the Show and participate in a variety of activities, including a networking dinner that is the highlight of Show week. “I'd like more Idaho legislators to join the Caucus, especially my fellow gearheads,” he says. He believes there are others who aren't involved in the automotive hobby but would likely also take an interest in the group.



Idaho Senator Jim Patrick, District 25



Long-time Corvette fan Senator Jim Patrick and his 2014 convertible on a cold winter day in Idaho.

In fact, his latest legislative endeavor is one he appropriated from Caucus members in other states. This year he is seeking a state law that would provide for the issuance of a single rear-mounted license plate for motor vehicles. Alternatively, he will forward legislation to allow a single plate for vehicles that were not originally equipped with a display bracket on the front of the vehicle and those hobby cars that are not yet allowed to run a single plate.

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“Many cars of today and yesterday have been designed without a place for a front plate, including Corvettes, Lamborghinis and Porsches. It doesn't seem practical to require owners to modify a vehicle to fit this requirement. Plus, these plates often block airflow to the radiator. In addition, these laws would save taxpayer money, conserve resources and bring Idaho in line with other states that are moving to a single-plate requirement.”

## WEB RESERVES

# Helping Hand For Haulers

## SEMA Action Network (SAN) Issues Online Guide to Motorsports Racing Trailer Laws

**R**acing enthusiasts may sometimes be issued a citation because their trailer is too long, the tow vehicle does not have a DOT number or for other related issues. The SEMA Action Network (SAN) website ([semaSAN.com](http://semaSAN.com)) now provides guidance on how to avoid these situations. Adding to a stout arsenal of web-based legislative tools, a new resource was created to help the motorsports community understand state and federal laws governing trailers and tow vehicles. The material is posted in the “Resources” menu under “Motorsports Trailers.”

When issued, citations generally fall within two categories: 1)the size of the trailer violated state law, or 2)the vehicle/trailer combination was considered “commercial” by enforcement authorities but had not been registered with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) or a state-equivalent agency. As you will see, the webpage divides the resource material into three sections: a comparison of state laws, folders containing laws/regulations for each individual state, and an explanation of federal laws triggered by commercial activity or vehicle weight. As the 2016 season takes shape, hopefully this information will help racers of all types better prepare for the journey ahead.



A new resource was created by the SEMA Action Network (SAN) to help the motorsports community understand state and federal laws governing trailers and tow vehicles.

Image Courtesy Shutterstock.com

## SAN DIRECTOR'S DISPATCH



Colby Martin

# Obtaining the Unobtainable

*“If you build it, he will come.”*  
—Field of Dreams

**T**he memorable line from the 1989 blockbuster film centers on an adult’s attempt to reclaim his past; particularly the troubled relationship with his father, a devoted baseball fan. In the years since the movie’s debut on the big screen, it has been used to describe the realization of an impossible dream. The premise fits perfectly with the new federal law that will allow us to purchase newly built completed replica vehicles for the first time ever. As detailed in the cover story of this issue, the SEMA Action Network’s (SAN) fight to enact this milestone legislation into law ultimately ended in victory.

Like myself, enthusiasts live vicariously behind a steering wheel. A special memory connected with a particular automobile can spark a personal sense of nostalgia or capture a dream. A rolling tribute to a past moment, feeling, or fantasy, if you will. Popular past models has been available for decades as kit cars and have allowed these dreams to become an affordable reality. Today, there are more early Ford roadsters, tri-five Chevys and first-generation Mustangs on the road than ever before—thanks to kits, reproduction bodies, patch panels and other restoration parts.

The possibility of buying a turn-key legend represents the next evolution in providing our hobby with greater options. This law will enable more dreamers to enter our community than ever before. It also opens the door for manufacturers to revive other sought-after cars with a built-in fan base. Imagine owning a functional version of the short-lived Tucker ’48 “Torpedo”, Toyota 2000GT or the original military-based Dodge Power Wagon. Each example has now achieved “cult” status among our ranks. Since current-model-year engine packages will be required for ready-to-run cars and trucks, it should only be a matter of time before powertrain manufacturers catch wind of these new opportunities and develop tailor-made products.

Providing the next generations of drivers with additional options should put to rest rumors and speculation regarding our hobby’s demise. The topic continues to be popular among car clubs everywhere and for good reason as computer programming often trumps mechanical tinkering these days. However, cross-over audiences are more welcome than ever. Brands such as the DeLorean Motor Company have realized that they possess an invaluable connection to the tech-minded “geek culture” (think of the ComicCon phenomenon). Bringing a beloved classic—immortalized by the ’80s *Back to the Future* film series—into the present using modern technology will allow a whole population of younger drivers to reconsider their leisure transportation choices.

Anything is possible with proper momentum. It’s hard to resist envisioning the joy of putting a “brand new” GT40 through its paces and turning a hot lap on a defined road course. Even a coned-off autocross track in a large, paved parking lot would suffice.



Based in Humble, Texas (a suburb of Houston), the current DeLorean Motor Company has owned the remaining stocks of parts, engineering drawings and some of the factory tooling and equipment from the original DeLorean ('81-'83) since the mid-'90s. Plans are underway to produce complete new cars thanks to the Low Volume Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Act.

# Congressional Current Events

**W**ith the 2016 legislative sessions now underway nationwide, federal proposals impacting car and truck enthusiasts are emerging. The SEMA Action Network (SAN) is monitoring the following issues. Keep an eye on your email inbox for an Action Alert should any of them warrant a response to lawmakers.

**Ethanol Labels:** The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) amended its fuel regulations to require more specific information be posted at the pump regarding the amount of ethanol that has been added to gasoline at levels above 10% (E10). As of July 2016, ethanol content ranging from 11%–83% will be called “Ethanol Flex Fuels,” and retailers must post labels with either the exact ethanol concentrations or an amount rounded to the nearest multiple of 10 for mid-level blends (11%–50%). For high-level blends, the label may reference the exact amount, round to the nearest multiple of 10, or label the fuel as “51%–83% Ethanol.” The ethanol flex fuel labels must include the text “Use Only in Flex-Fuel Vehicles/ May Harm Other Engines.” The SAN supports the FTC’s amended rule as a way to raise consumer awareness at the pump, since ethanol causes metal corrosion and dissolves certain plastics and rubbers, posing harm to older vehicles that were not constructed with ethanol-compatible materials.

**Recreational Off-Highway Vehicles (ROVs):** Congress passed legislation in December that prevents the Consumer Product Safety Com-



mission’s (CPSC) efforts to issue an ROV safety standard during the current fiscal year ending on September 30, 2016. The current industry standard issued by the American

National Standards Institute (ANSI) adequately protects ROV riders and is preferable to the CPSC standard, which would stifle design innovation and limit consumer choice.

**Utah Public Lands Initiative (PLI):** U.S. House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop (R-UT) and Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) released their draft Public Lands Initiative. The legislation will final-



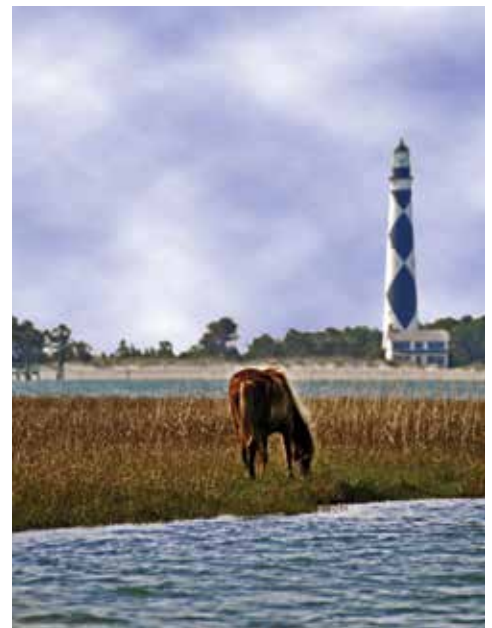
ize land use designations for more than 18 million acres of land in seven eastern and southern Utah counties. The proposal is the product of three years of work and more than 1,200 meetings with divergent stakeholder groups, including local communities, off-road groups, environmentalists, logging, grazing, energy interests, etc. Of particular interest to the OHV community, the PLI creates motorized recreation zones in San Juan and Grand Counties encompassing more than 375,000 acres, along with a 93-mile red rock OHV trail connecting towns in Emery, Grand and San Juan Counties. The SAN welcomes the bill’s introduction and is now reviewing the legislative details. For more information, visit [www.utahpli.com](http://www.utahpli.com).

**National OHV Area Designations:** The SAN supports legislation that would permanently designate six existing OHV areas comprising 300,000 acres in California’s San Bernardino County as national OHV areas: Johnson Valley, Spangler Hills, El Mirage, Rasor, Dumont Dunes and Stoddard Valley. The bill is the result of outreach to OHV, environmental, preservation, energy, military and local communities. Supporters are seeking passage of

the legislation this year since the President is under pressure to create three national monuments in the same area covering more than 1 million acres and threatening existing OHV trails.

**Clear Creek Recreation Area:** Legislation was introduced in Congress to reopen the 75,000 acre Clear Creek National Recreation Area in San Benito and Fresno Counties of California. The SAN-supported bill would provide OHV access to more than 240 miles of public trails closed in 2008 due to concerns surrounding exposure to asbestos. The California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission ordered an independent risk assessment study and concluded that the land could be managed without exposing the public to unacceptable risks.

**Cape Lookout, North Carolina:** The National Park Service (NPS) proposed a new plan for regulating off-highway vehicle access to the Cape Lookout National Seashore, a 56-mile long section of the Southern Outer Banks in North Carolina. The NPS is responding to requirements to manage motorized recreation while protecting wildlife and endangered species. The agency’s proposal relies on designated



routes and establishes a permit system capped at 5,500 annual permits. After a one-year grace period, only non-sport ATVs and UTVs would be permitted access, with a 25-mile-per-hour speed limit.

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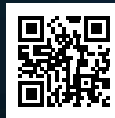
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Spring 2016

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