

THE WANADA BULLETIN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT FRANCHISED NEW CAR DEALERS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

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DARCARS Eliminates Lunch Debt for Prince George's Students

DARCARS Automotive Group made a generous donation earlier this week to completely eliminate student lunch debt in Prince George's County.

During a ceremony at William Hall Academy in Capitol Heights on Tuesday, DARCARS chief operating officer Jamie Darvish presented Prince George's County Public Schools CEO Monica Goldson with a \$25,000 check, earmarked towards ensuring that every student in the county has a clean slate when it comes to paying for something as essential as a school meal.

"I'm glad we could be here to do our part in the community," Darvish said, [according to WTOP-FM](#). "Prince George's County is extremely important to me, and my family, and our whole team at DARCARS."

"The community supports us immensely and we're glad to be able to do something to give back and support the community," Darvish continued. "I really look and I see it's not easy to be a kid today. The last thing in the world that a child needs to worry about is eating. And being hungry makes accomplishing tasks of overcoming those challenges and burdens in society that much harder. So, I'm honored and I'm glad that we could step up and do this. And stay tuned. We're not stopping here."

Golson commended Darvish and the DARCARS leadership team not just for their support of the school system, but for targeting their donation specifically in an area where it could do immense good, and quickly. According to Prince George's County, the total outstanding lunch debt in the county was over \$16,000, and more than one out of every four students comes from a home with a household income under \$50,000.



DARCARS COO Jamie Darvish (second from left), presents a \$25,000 check to the Excellence in Education Foundation for PGCPSS to pay off outstanding student lunch debt in the county. He was joined by Prince George's County Public Schools CEO Monica Goldson at the event in Capitol Heights. (Photo courtesy of Prince George's County Public Schools)

“When our students enter our schools, we want to make sure that they’re able to focus on learning,” Golson [said on Tuesday](#). “I’m extremely grateful that a community partners has joined us to make sure that parents from the bottom of our school district in Accokeek, all the way to the top of our school district in Laurel and Beltsville benefit from this holiday cheer.”

Maryland MVA Issues Notice Regarding Changing of Title Application Requirements

Following last year’s enactment of Senate Bill 84, which was requested by Governor Larry Hogan (R) and passed without any dissent in the General Assembly, title certificate applications can now be filed electronically. The Maryland MVA [issued a Bulletin](#) about the law last week, noting that the change means that every pertinent dealer form, save the Federal Odometer Statement, can now be submitted electronically.

The state’s bulletin included a list of best practices for dealers related to e-filed title applications:

- Customers’ e-signature must be witnessed by the person executing the sale.
- If an owner of a vehicle is under 18, a parent, spouse, employer, or other responsible adult must sign as co-signer. Co-signer is only certifying the accuracy of the information, they will not be shown on the title.
- Printed Signatures are only acceptable with proof that the applicant cannot sign their name.
- Company and Corporate signatures need to have the capacity of the individual stated after the signature.
- Be sure to keep copies of customer identification with the transaction paperwork at your business location and send a copy with the MVA transaction paperwork.

The state recommends dealers contact mvablcscd@mva.maryland.gov if they have any questions.

Save the Date for the Maryland MVA Customer Connect Digital Town Hall

The Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration issued a [notice this week](#) regarding an upcoming town hall focused on the state’s new motor-vehicle software program, Customer Connect. The online-only town hall, to be held at 9 a.m. on Thurs., Jan. 16, will provide viewers with an overview of the software, and more information about the logistics around the upcoming transfer to the system.

The state’s notice, Maryland’s MVA will begin the rollout of the program on May 26, 2020, which is the first Tuesday following Memorial Day.

According to the notice, the state MVA is implementing the Customer Connect system to modernize all customer-facing IT systems. The application of Customer Connect will provide system users with a more streamlined experience, enhance communication with partners through improved interfaces, and help in achieving our goal of providing premier customer service to Marylanders every day.

According to the state, “Customer Connect is a motor vehicle software application from FAST Enterprises, LLC, that has already been successfully implemented in 14 states. FAST is working with MDOT MVA to personalize the software to align with Maryland's specific needs. Real-time updates and verification will prevent fraud and outdated information from being used, as well as simplify approval processes.”

Bookmark WANADA’s Law-Enforcement Points of Contact List for Dealership Theft Issues

As a value-add for its dealer members, WANADA is compiling a special list of law-enforcement contacts from around the region who deal explicitly with theft cases at automobile dealerships. The resource, titled “Points of Contact for Stolen Dealership Property,” can be accessed by visiting the WANADA site, clicking *Membership* and then *Helpful Links for Dealers*.

Currently, the page lists specific law-enforcement contacts from the Howard County and Montgomery County police departments, plus the Maryland State Police, with more additions being added on a rolling basis.

Please note, you must have membership access to visit this page. If you are a qualified member dealer, please contact Katy Orme at ko@wanada.org for more information on how to get login credentials.

House Set to Pass USMCA This Week, Faces Uncertain Future in the Senate

The U.S. House of Representatives is set to pass the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement this week, more than a year after the framework for the trade agreement was finalized by the three nations and following a series of alterations by the Democratic-controlled House leadership.

Last week, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) announced that the agreement, designed to be a “replacement” for the now-scuttled North American Free Trade Agreement, would come to a vote before Congress leaves for the holidays. The revised agreement, which came after months of negotiations between House leaders and the Trump Administration, has now earned signoff from major union leaders including the UAW, longtime protectionist senators like Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), and the president himself. On Tuesday, the House Ways and Means Committee approved the USMCA via voice vote, meaning it will likely pass the full chamber on Thursday.

However, the modifications to the agreement have created a strange situation where the Trump Administration is now getting pushback from members of the Senate, which the Republicans control. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (Ky.) said the Senate will not vote on the USMCA until after a potential impeachment trial concludes, delaying final ratification by at least several weeks.

A business-led advocacy group formed to back the agreement, named the Pass USMCA Coalition, also announced last week that it will no longer issue statements of support in favor of the treaty. Mexican president Andrés Manuel López Obrador and deputy foreign minister Jesus Suade expressed frustration at the changes they say were made without their input, though reports earlier this week suggested that U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer has largely assuaged the concerns of the Mexican government.

Among the new concessions House leadership was able to extract is a requirement that 75 percent of vehicles sold in North America be produced on the continent in factories paying workers at least \$16 an hour. The USMCA, as currently written, also raises requirements on the percentage of North American-made steel and parts that must be used for an OEM to receive duty-free tax status, makes it easier for Mexican factories to unionize, removes certain intellectual property protections for drug companies, and requires certain multi-national organizations to agree to certain arbitration guidelines that weren't in the original agreement.

That said, most political observers expect the USMCA to be passed as currently written in the Senate at some point. Vice President Pence has made dozens of trips across North America over the past year rallying public support for the agreement, and President Trump has made it clear that passage would give him a major policy result to campaign on in 2020, even with the changes from the House.

Auto industry leaders have also expressed support for the House's agreement, saying that the certainty around trade would help their business, considering how much advanced planning goes into manufacturing and supply-chain management. But most observers also agree that the new deal will put new price pressures on OEMs, by raising labor costs for Mexican-made cars and also making it more difficult for manufacturers to move currently-existing jobs south.

Reminder: Virginia DMV to Halt Manual Title/Registration Processing at Service Centers in 2020

WANADA would like to once again remind its members that the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles [announced in October](#) that, as of January 1, they will temporarily cease manual processing of title and registration requests at DMV service centers.

As a result of this decision, related to an anticipated increase in DMV volume because of the looming Oct. 1 deadline for residents to get REALID-compliant licenses to board airplanes or access federal buildings, all manual title and registration requests will be processed at three auto auctions. Manual requests can be mailed or delivered in person at the following three locations:

- Manheim Fredericksburg
120 Auction Drive
Fredericksburg, VA 22406
- America's Auto Auction
656 South Military Hwy
Virginia Beach, VA 23464
- Manheim Harrisonburg
3560 Early Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

The state encourages dealers to state's [Online Dealer Program](#) in order to both process requests far faster, and to avoid the manual processing fees. A full list of online-eligible transactions, and information on how a dealer can join the program, can be viewed both at the DMV's website and in the letter linked above.

Holiday Closing Signs and SoberRide Posters Available for WANADA Member Dealers

WANADA is providing its' member dealerships with business closing signs and SoberRide Posters for the upcoming holiday season. We hope members utilize the signs during the extended and/or modified hours for holiday sales.

- For Christmas Eve and Christmas Day signs, click [here](#)
- For New Years Eve and New Years Day, click [here](#)

Dealers may type in your hours and print several to post around the dealership. The signs are also accessible at the WANADA [website](#) by logging in and go to *Membership* tab and click *Helpful Links for Dealers*.

Please click [here](#) for the optional Washington Regional Alcohol Program SoberRide endorsed posters regarding the holiday season to post in customer and/or employee areas. The promotion offers a \$15 Lyft credit for any user, valid for one free ride nightly between December 20 and January 1, between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. WANADA is proud to sponsor this important and valuable endeavor, organized by the Washington Regional Alcohol Program.

Please contact Kathy Teich, (202) 237-7200 or kt@wanada.org, if you have any questions.

Staying Ahead...

My mission is to show you factory guys that buildings don't sell cars, people sell cars. – Charlie Harmel, GM of EuroMotors Bethesda (EuroMotors is currently operating out of a small outdated facility due to renovation requirements, and the dealership is maintaining all sales figures.)