



Md.'s ugly new license plates

12:34 p.m. EDT, June 14, 2010

Despite all of the serious problems in the world, our country and our state, please allow me complain about something of very little importance but which is still incredibly irritating. Who in the hell approved the new Maryland license plates? For over a decade our state has had one of the best looking and arguably the most tasteful standard license plates in the county. No silly sayings like Idaho's "Famous Potatoes" or trite pictures like the off-center lobster declaring Maine as "Vacationland."

Now Maryland is to have this garish red, white and blue tag, complete with flag, walled fort, bombs bursting in air, an acknowledgment of the always topical War of 1812, and a poorly named web address. And the artistic design? It looks like it is page ripped from a second grade coloring book or maybe a computer graphic from 1985.

Don't we have enough celebration of wars past and nationalistic flag waving to prove the we are proud of are country yet? Just look outside any car dealer, gas station or bank, not to mention on the lapel of any politician who has made a public gaffe or been caught having an affair. Besides most people who want flags on their cars already have three or four flag decals (ever notice that one isn't enough?) and a magnetic ribbon or two adorning their trunk.

Finally, people spend a fortune buying a car that designers have labored over to make it aesthetically pleasing from every angle. Car buyers often lose sleep and bother their friends asking for opinions on whether they should buy their new vehicle in brilliant white pearl, metallic platinum frost, or moonlight alabaster sparkle. Well, now it won't matter as much because every new car in Maryland will look like it has a big 4th of July pie eating contest winner's ribbon on each bumper.

And oh, I don't hate America, I just hate bad design.

Robb Preis, [Ellicott City](#)