§ 403. Number plates continued. 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the commissioner, upon registration or reregistration of any vehicle required to be registered under this chapter, may continue the use of number plates for an additional period as may be determined by him, in which event he shall issue and deliver a tag or other evidence of registration, which shall be attached or affixed in such manner as he may prescribe by regulation. The failure to affix or display such tag or other evidence of registration, in the manner prescribed by the commissioner, shall constitute a violation of this section. The removal from any vehicle, other than by the owner of the vehicle or person authorized by such owner or by a police officer in the performance of his duties, of such tag or other evidence of registration shall constitute a class B misdemeanor.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision one of this section, the commissioner, upon registration or reregistration of any vehicle required to be registered under this chapter between July first, nineteen hundred eighty-six and June thirtieth, nineteen hundred eighty-eight, shall issue a new number plate or plates to each registrant or reregistrant, and provided further an emblem bearing the likeness of the Statue of Liberty shall appear on the number plate or plates except that such emblem, in the discretion of the commissioner, need not appear on a number plate or plates less than ten inches long. The commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations for plate reissuance including which plates will be required to be replaced in which year. The commissioner is authorized to take whatever actions are necessary to ensure that the transaction necessary for the reissuance of such number plate or plates shall be accomplished by mail so as to minimize the need for the reregistrant to process the transaction in person.

3. a. Upon the request of an applicant and payment by the applicant of a one-time fee not to exceed twenty dollars, and subject to regulations promulgated by the commissioner, the commissioner shall provide a number plate or plates bearing the same distinctive numerals and/or letters as the number plate being replaced. Such one-time fee shall be in addition to the regular fee prescribed by section four hundred one of this

article.

b. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph a of this subdivision, no such one-time fee shall be charged for any plate subject to the provisions of section four hundred four or four hundred four-l of this article, for which an annual service charge is paid in addition to the regular fee prescribed by section four hundred one of this article.

c. Nothing contained in paragraph a of this subdivision shall be deemed to authorize the imposition of a fee for a number plate or plates which is higher than any fee otherwise authorized by this chapter.