

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2003**

**HOUSE BILL 855  
RATIFIED BILL**

AN ACT TO INCREASE THE FEE FOR A PERSONALIZED REGISTRATION PLATE BY TEN DOLLARS AND TO CREDIT THE INCREASED FEE REVENUE TO THE NATURAL HERITAGE TRUST FUND AND THE PARKS AND RECREATION TRUST FUND, TO REQUIRE THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE TRANSPORTATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE TO STUDY VARIOUS ISSUES RELATED TO SPECIAL REGISTRATION PLATES, TO ALLOW THE NC COASTAL FEDERATION SPECIAL PLATE TO HAVE A DIFFERENT PLATE BACKGROUND, AND TO AUTHORIZE THE DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES TO ISSUE THE FOLLOWING NEW SPECIAL REGISTRATION PLATES: ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES, BE ACTIVE NC, BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY FOUNDATION, BREAST CANCER AWARENESS, BUFFALO SOLDIERS, CELEBRATE ADOPTION, CRYSTAL COAST ARTIFICIAL REEF ASSOCIATION, DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE, FRIENDS OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL, MOTHERS AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING, POW/MIA, RED HAT SOCIETY, RETIRED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, SURVEYORS, AND ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** G.S. 20-63(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Every license plate shall have displayed upon it the registration number assigned to the vehicle for which it is issued, the name of the State of North Carolina, which may be abbreviated, and the year number for which it is issued or the date of expiration. A plate issued for a commercial vehicle, as defined in G.S. 20-4.2(1), and weighing 26,001 pounds or more, must bear the word "commercial," unless the plate is a special registration plate authorized in G.S. 20-79.4 or the commercial vehicle is a trailer or is licensed for 6,000 pounds or less. The plate issued for vehicles licensed for 7,000 pounds through 26,000 pounds must bear the word "weighted".

~~A-Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a registration plate issued by the Division for a private passenger vehicle or for a private hauler vehicle licensed for 6,000 pounds or less, other than a Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park special registration plate or a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation special registration plate less shall be a "First in Flight" plate. A "First in Flight" plate shall have the words "First in Flight" printed at the top of the plate above all other letters and numerals. The background of the plate shall depict the Wright Brothers biplane flying over Kitty Hawk Beach, with the plane flying slightly upward and to the right. The following special registration plates do not have to be a "First in Flight" plate. The design of the plates that are not "First in Flight" plates must be approved by the Division and the State Highway Patrol for clarity and ease of identification.~~

- (1) Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- (2) Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.
- (3) Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation.
- (4) Friends of the Appalachian Trail.
- (5) NC Coastal Federation."

**SECTION 2.** G.S. 20-79.4(b), as amended by S.L. 2003-10, 2003-11, and 2003-68, is amended by adding the following new subdivisions to read:

"(b) Types. – The Division shall issue the following types of special registration plates:

- ...  
(1e) Alternative Fuel Vehicles. – Issuable to the registered owner of an alternative fuel vehicle. The plate shall bear the words "Alternative Fuel Vehicle". The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the plate before it may be developed.
- ...  
(3e) Be Active NC. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle in accordance with G.S. 20-81.12. The plate shall bear the phrase "Be Active NC" and a representation of the "Be Active NC" logo.
- ...  
(3h) Breast Cancer Awareness. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle. The plate shall bear the phrase "Early Detection Saves Lives" and a representation of a pink ribbon. The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the plate before it may be developed.
- ~~(3d)~~...  
(3j) Bronze Star Recipient. – Issuable to a recipient of the Bronze Star. The plate shall bear the emblem of the Bronze Star and the words "Bronze Star".
- ...  
(3m) Buffalo Soldiers. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle in accordance with G.S. 20-81.12. The plate shall bear the words "The Buffalo Soldiers" and the logo of the 9th & 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association of the Buffalo Soldiers Greater North Carolina Chapter (BSGNCC).
- ...  
(3p) Celebrate Adoption. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle. The plate shall bear the phrase "Celebrate Adoption" and a representation of a white ribbon with a red heart on it. The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the plate before it may be developed.
- ...  
(11d) Crystal Coast. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle in accordance with G.S. 20-81.12. The plate shall bear the words "Crystal Coast Artificial Reef Association" and a representation of a SCUBA diving flag.
- ...  
(11g) Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle. The plate shall bear the sorority's name and symbol. The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the plate before it may be developed.
- ...  
(15e) Fraternal Order of Police. – The plate authorized by this subdivision shall bear a representation of the Fraternal Order of Police emblem containing the letters 'FOP'. The Division must receive 300 applications for the plate before it may be developed. The plate is issuable to one of the following:
  - a. A person who presents proof of active membership in the State Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police for the year in which the license plate is sought.

- b. The surviving spouse of a person who was a member of the State Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police, so long as the surviving spouse continues to renew the plate and does not remarry.
- ...  
(27e) Mothers Against Drunk Driving. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle. The plate shall bear the letters "M.A.D.D." and the words "Mothers Against Drunk Driving". The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the plate before it may be developed.
- ...  
(32c) POW/MIA. – Issuable to the owner of a motor vehicle. The plate shall bear the official POW/MIA logo. The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the plate before it may be developed.
- (36)(35d) Register of Deeds. – Issuable to a register of deeds. The plate shall bear the words "Register of Deeds" and the letter "R" followed by a number representing the county of the register of deeds. The number of a county shall be the order of the county in an alphabetical list of counties that assigns number one to the first county in the list.
- ...  
(36) Red Hat Society. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle. The plate shall bear a representation of The Red Hat Society. The Division shall not use the name and logo of The Red Hat Society, Inc., on the plate unless The Red Hat Society, Inc., licenses, without charge, the State to use the name and logo on the plate. The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the plate before it may be developed.
- ...  
(36b) Retired Law Enforcement Officers. – The plate authorized by this subdivision shall bear the phrase "Retired Law Enforcement Officer" and a representation of a law enforcement badge. The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the plate before it may be developed. The plate is issuable to one of the following:
  - a. A retired law enforcement officer presenting to the Division, along with the application for the plate, a copy of the officer's retired identification card or letter of retirement.
  - b. The surviving spouse of a person who had a retired law enforcement officer plate at the time of death so long as the surviving spouse continues to renew the plate and does not remarry.
- (36b)(36e) Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle in accordance with G.S. 20-81.12. The plate shall bear the phrase "Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation" and a logo approved by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Inc.
- (36e)(36h) Save the Sea Turtles. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle in accordance with G.S. 20-81.12. The plate may bear the phrase "Save the Sea Turtles" and a representation related to sea turtles.
- ...  
(45d) Surveyor Plate. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle in accordance with G.S. 20-81.12. The plate shall bear the words "Following In Their Footsteps" and shall bear a picture of a transit.

...

~~(45b)~~(45f) Sweet Potato. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle. The plate may bear a phrase and picture representing the State's official vegetable, the sweet potato. The Division may not issue the plate authorized by this subdivision unless it receives at least 300 applications for the plate.

~~(45e)~~(45i) Tobacco Heritage. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle. The plate shall bear a picture of a tobacco leaf and plow. The Division may not issue the plate authorized by this subdivision unless it receives at least 300 applications for the plate.

(52) Zeta Phi Beta Sorority. – Issuable to the registered owner of a motor vehicle in accordance with G.S. 20-81.12. The plate shall bear the sorority's name and symbol."

**SECTION 3.** G.S. 20-79.7(a), as amended by S.L. 2003-11 and 2003-68, reads as rewritten:

"(a) Fees. – Upon request, the Division shall provide and issue free of charge one registration plate to a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, a 100% disabled veteran, and an ex-prisoner of war. All other special registration plates, including additional Congressional Medal of Honor, 100% Disabled Veteran, and Ex-Prisoner of War plates, are subject to the regular motor vehicle registration fee in G.S. 20-87 or G.S. 20-88 plus an additional fee in the following amount:

<u>Special Plate</u>	<u>Additional Fee Amount</u>
<u>Crystal Coast</u>	<u>\$30.00</u>
Historical Attraction	\$30.00
<u>Personalized</u>	<u>\$30.00</u>
State Attraction	\$30.00
<u>Buffalo Soldiers</u>	<u>\$25.00</u>
Collegiate Insignia	\$25.00
Goodness Grows	\$25.00
Kids First	\$25.00
Olympic Games	\$25.00
NC Agribusiness	\$25.00
NC Coastal Federation	\$25.00
Nurses	\$25.00
<b>(Effective until June 30, 2006)</b>	
<u>Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation</u>	<u>\$25.00</u>
Special Olympics	\$25.00
<u>Surveyor Plate</u>	<u>\$25.00</u>
The V Foundation for Cancer Research Division	\$25.00
University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina	\$25.00
Animal Lovers	\$20.00
Audubon North Carolina	\$20.00
<u>Be Active NC</u>	<u>\$20.00</u>
Ducks Unlimited	\$20.00
<b>(Effective until June 30, 2006)</b>	
Harley Owners' Group	\$20.00
First in Forestry	\$20.00
Litter Prevention	\$20.00
March of Dimes	\$20.00
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity	\$20.00
<del>Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation</del>	<del>\$25.00</del>
Save the Sea Turtles	\$20.00
Scenic Rivers	\$20.00
School Technology	\$20.00

Soil and Water Conservation	\$20.00
Special Forces Association	\$20.00
Support Public Schools	\$20.00
Wildlife Resources	\$20.00
<u>Zeta Phi Beta Sorority</u>	<u>\$20.00</u>
<u>Personalized</u>	<u>\$20.00</u>
Active Member of the National Guard	None
100% Disabled Veteran	None
Ex-Prisoner of War	None
Legion of Valor	None
Purple Heart Recipient	None
Silver Star Recipient	None
All Other Special Plates	\$10.00."

**SECTION 4.** G.S. 20-79.7(b), as amended by S.L. 2003-11 and 2003-68, reads as rewritten:

"(b) Distribution of Fees. – The Special Registration Plate Account and the Collegiate and Cultural Attraction Plate Account are established within the Highway Fund. The Division must credit the additional fee imposed for the special registration plates listed in subsection (a) among the Special Registration Plate Account (SRPA), the Collegiate and Cultural Attraction Plate Account (CCAPA), ~~and~~ the Natural Heritage Trust Fund (NHTF), which is established under G.S. 113-77.7, and the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, which is established under G.S. 113-44.15, as follows:

<u>Special Plate</u>	<u>SRPA</u>	<u>CCAPA</u>	<u>NHTF</u>	<u>PRTF</u>
Animal Lovers	\$10	\$10	0	0
Audubon North Carolina	\$10	\$10	0	0
<u>Be Active NC</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Buffalo Soldiers</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$15</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Crystal Coast</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$20</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Ducks Unlimited	\$10	\$10	0	0
First in Forestry	\$10	0	\$10	0
Goodness Grows	\$10	\$15	0	0
<b>(Effective until June 30, 2006)</b>				
Harley Owners' Group	\$10	\$10	0	0
Historical Attraction	\$10	\$20	0	0
In-State Collegiate Insignia	\$10	\$15	0	0
Kids First	\$10	\$15	0	0
Litter Prevention	\$10	\$10	0	0
March of Dimes	\$10	\$10	0	0
NC Agribusiness	\$10	\$15	0	0
NC Coastal Federation	\$10	\$15	0	0
Nurses	\$10	\$15	0	0
Olympic Games	\$10	\$15	0	0
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity	\$10	\$10	0	0
Out-of-state Collegiate Insignia	\$10	0	\$15	0
Personalized	\$10	0	<del>\$10</del> \$15	<del>\$5</del>
<b>(Effective until June 30, 2006)</b>				
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	\$10	\$15	0	0
Save the Sea Turtles	\$10	\$10	0	0
Scenic Rivers	\$10	\$10	0	0
School Technology	\$10	\$10	0	0
Soil and Water Conservation	\$10	\$10	0	0
Special Forces Association	\$10	\$10	0	0
Special Olympics	\$10	<del>\$10</del> \$15	0	0
State Attraction	\$10	\$20	0	0
Support Public Schools	\$10	\$10	0	0

<u>Surveyor Plate</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$15</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
The V Foundation for Cancer Research	\$10	\$15	0	<u>0</u>
University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina	\$10	\$15	0	<u>0</u>
Wildlife Resources	\$10	\$10	0	<u>0</u>
<u>Zeta Phi Beta Sorority</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>\$10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
All other Special Plates	\$10	0	<del>0</del>	<u>0</u> ."

**SECTION 5.** G.S. 20-81.12(b2) reads as rewritten:

"(b2) State Attraction Plates. – The Division must receive 300 or more applications for a State attraction plate before the plate may be developed. The Division must transfer quarterly the money in the Collegiate and Cultural Attraction Plate Account derived from the sale of State attraction plates to the organizations named below in proportion to the number of State attraction plates sold representing that organization:

- (1) Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation. – The revenue derived from the special plate shall be transferred quarterly to Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation for use in promoting and preserving the Blue Ridge Parkway as a scenic attraction in North Carolina.
- ~~(1a)~~(1a) Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. – The revenue derived from the special plate shall be transferred quarterly to the Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Inc., to be used for educational materials, preservation programs, capital improvements for the portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park that is located in North Carolina, and operating expenses of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- (1b) Friends of the Appalachian Trail. – The revenue derived from the special plate shall be transferred quarterly to The Appalachian Trail Conference to be used for educational materials, preservation programs, trail maintenance, trailway and viewshed acquisitions, trailway and viewshed easement acquisitions, capital improvements for the portions of the Appalachian Trail and connecting trails that are located in North Carolina, and related administrative and operating expenses.
- ~~(1a)~~(1c) The North Carolina Arboretum. – The revenue derived from the special plate shall be transferred quarterly to The North Carolina Arboretum Society and used to help the Society obtain grants for the North Carolina Arboretum and for capital improvements to the North Carolina Arboretum.
- ~~(1b)~~(1d) The North Carolina Maritime Museum. – The revenue derived from the special plate shall be transferred quarterly to Friends of the Museum, North Carolina Maritime Museum, Inc., to be used for educational programs and conservation programs and for operating expenses of the North Carolina Maritime Museum.
- (2) The North Carolina Zoological Society. – The revenue derived from the special plate shall be transferred quarterly to The North Carolina Zoological Society, Incorporated, to be used for educational programs and conservation programs at the North Carolina Zoo at Asheboro and for operating expenses of the North Carolina Zoo at Asheboro."

**SECTION 6.** G.S. 20-81.12, as amended by S.L. 2003-11 and S.L. 2003-68, is amended by adding the following new subsections to read:

"(b26) Be Active NC. – The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the Be Active NC plate before the plate may be developed. The Division shall transfer quarterly the money in the Collegiate and Cultural Attraction Plate Account derived from the sale of the Be Active NC plates to Be Active North Carolina, Inc., to be used to promote physical activity in North Carolina communities.

(b27) Buffalo Soldiers. – The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the Buffalo Soldiers plate before the plate may be developed. The Division shall transfer quarterly the money in the Collegiate and Cultural Attraction Plate Account derived from the sale of the Buffalo Soldiers plates to the 9th & 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association of the Buffalo Soldiers Greater North Carolina Chapter (BSGNCC) for its public outreach programs.

(b28) Crystal Coast. – The Division must receive 300 or more applications for the Crystal Coast plate before the plate may be developed. The Division shall transfer quarterly the money in the Collegiate and Cultural Attraction Plate Account derived from the sale of Crystal Coast plates to the Crystal Coast Artificial Reef Association to be used to promote scuba diving off the Crystal Coast.

(b29) Surveyor Plate. – The Division must receive 300 or more applications for a Surveyor plate before the plate may be developed. The Division shall transfer quarterly the money in the Collegiate and Cultural Attraction Plate Account derived from the sale of Surveyor plates to The North Carolina Society of Surveyors Education Foundation, Inc., for public educational programs.

(b30) Zeta Phi Beta Sorority. – The Division must receive 300 or more applications for a Zeta Phi Beta Sorority plate before the plate may be developed. The Division shall transfer quarterly the money in the Collegiate and Cultural Attraction Plate Account derived from the sale of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority plates to the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Education Foundation, through the Raleigh office, for the benefit of undergraduate scholarships in this State."

**SECTION 7.** The Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee shall study the following issues related to special registration plates:

- (1) The number of special registration plates that have not received the minimum number of applications in the three years since their authorization and whether to repeal the authority for these plates.
- (2) The registration plate background and other alternative methods of identifying North Carolina vehicles.
- (3) The fees imposed for special plates and the distribution of those fees. The Committee may ask the Division of Motor Vehicles to study the impact of any fee increase on the number of special registration plates issued. The Committee may also require the organizations that receive money from special registration plates to provide a report on the amount of money received by the organization from the sale of its special registration plate and how the organization spends the money it receives from the sale of this plate.

The Committee may report its findings and any recommended legislation to the 2004 Regular Session of the 2003 General Assembly or the 2005 Regular Session of the 2005 General Assembly.

**SECTION 8.** Sections 7 and 8 of this act are effective when they become law. The remainder of this act becomes effective January 1, 2004.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 20<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2003.

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Beverly E. Perdue  
President of the Senate

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Richard T. Morgan  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

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Michael F. Easley  
Governor

Approved \_\_\_\_\_m. this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2003