

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2011**

**SESSION LAW 2012-159
HOUSE BILL 989**

AN ACT TO LIMIT ELIGIBILITY FOR PERMANENT REGISTRATION PLATES TO GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES, AND TO REFORM THE PROCESS BY WHICH ELIGIBLE ENTITIES APPLY FOR AND ARE ISSUED PERMANENT REGISTRATION PLATES, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM EVALUATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PROGRAM EVALUATION DIVISION, BUT TO CONTINUE TO ALLOW CIVIL AIR PATROLS, INCORPORATED EMERGENCY RESCUE SQUADS, RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS, AND LOCAL CHAPTERS OF THE AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR PERMANENT REGISTRATION PLATES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 20-84 reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-84. Permanent registration plates; State Highway Patrol.

(a) General. – The Division may issue a permanent registration plate for a motor vehicle owned by one of the ~~persons~~ entities authorized to have a permanent registration plate in this section. To obtain a permanent registration plate, ~~a person~~ an authorized representative of the entity must provide proof of ownership, provide proof of financial responsibility as required by G.S. 20-309, and pay a fee of six dollars (\$6.00). A permanent plate issued under this section may be transferred as provided in G.S. 20-78 to a replacement vehicle of the same classification. A permanent registration plate issued under this section must be a distinctive color and bear the word "permanent". In addition, a permanent registration plate issued under subdivision (b)(1) of this section must have distinctive color and design that is readily distinguishable from all other permanent registration plates issued under this section. Every eligible entity that receives a permanent registration plate under this section shall ensure that the permanent registration plate is registered under a single name. That single name shall be the full legal name of the eligible entity.

(b) Permanent Registration Plates. – The Division may issue permanent plates for the following motor vehicles:

- (1) A motor vehicle owned by the State or one of its agencies.
- (2) A motor vehicle owned by a county, city or town.
- (3) A motor vehicle owned by a board of education.
- ~~(4) A motor vehicle owned by an orphanage.~~
- (5) A motor vehicle owned by the civil air patrol.
- (6) A motor vehicle owned by an incorporated emergency rescue squad.
- ~~(7) A motor vehicle owned by an incorporated REACT ("Radio Emergency Association of Citizen Teams") Team.~~
- ~~(8) A motor vehicle owned by a person and used exclusively in the support of a disaster relief effort.~~
- ~~(9) A bus owned by a church and used exclusively for transporting individuals to Sunday school, to church services, and to other church related activities.~~
- (10) A motor vehicle owned by a rural fire department, agency, or association.
- ~~(11) A motor vehicle in the form of a mobile X-ray unit operated exclusively in this State for the purpose of diagnosis, treatment, and discovery of tuberculosis, and owned by the North Carolina Tuberculosis Association, Incorporated, or by a local chapter or association of the North Carolina Tuberculosis Association, Incorporated.~~



- (12) A motor vehicle owned by a local chapter of the American National Red Cross and used for emergency or disaster work.
- ~~(13) A motor vehicle owned by a sheltered workshop recognized or approved by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.~~
- ~~(14) A motor vehicle owned by a nonprofit agency or organization that provides transportation for or operates programs subject to and approved in accordance with standards adopted by the Commission for Mental Health and Human Services.~~
- ~~(15) A bus or trackless trolley owned by a city and operated under a franchise authorizing the use of city streets. This subdivision does not apply to a bus or trackless trolley operated under a franchise authorizing an intercity operation.~~
- ~~(16) A trailer owned by a nationally chartered charitable organization and used exclusively for parade floats and for transporting vehicles and structures used only in parades.~~
- (17) A motor vehicle owned by a community college. A community college vehicle purchased with State equipment funds shall be issued a permanent registration plate with the same distinctive color and design as a permanent registration plate issued under subdivision (1) of this subsection.

(c) State Highway Patrol. – In lieu of all other registration requirements, the Commissioner shall each year assign to the State Highway Patrol, upon payment of six dollars (\$6.00) per registration plate, a sufficient number of regular registration plates of the same letter prefix and in numerical sequence beginning with number 100 to meet the requirements of the State Highway Patrol for use on Division vehicles assigned to the State Highway Patrol. The commander of the Patrol shall, when such plates are assigned, issue to each member of the State Highway Patrol a registration plate for use upon the Division vehicle assigned to the member pursuant to G.S. 20-190 and assign a registration plate to each Division service vehicle operated by the Patrol. An index of such assignments of registration plates shall be kept at each State Highway Patrol radio station and a copy of it shall be furnished to the registration division of the Division. Information as to the individual assignments of the registration plates shall be made available to the public upon request to the same extent and in the same manner as regular registration information. The commander, when necessary, may reassign registration plates provided that the reassignment shall appear upon the index required under this subsection within 20 days after the reassignment.

(d) Revocation. – The Division may revoke all permanent registration plates issued to eligible entities for vehicles that are 90 days or more past due for a vehicle inspection, as required by G.S. 20-183.4C. This subsection does not limit or restrict the authority of the Division to revoke permanent registration plates pursuant to other applicable law.

SECTION 2. G.S. 117-33 reads as rewritten:

"§ 117-33. Declared public agency of State; taxes and assessments.

A telephone membership corporation heretofore or hereafter organized under this Article shall be, and is hereby declared to be a public agency, and shall have within its limits for which it was formed the same rights as any other political subdivision of the State, and all property owned by said telephone membership corporation and used exclusively for the purpose of said corporation shall be held in the same manner and subject to the same taxes and assessments as property owned by any county or municipality of the State so long as said property is owned by said telephone membership corporation and is used for the purposes for which the corporation was formed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a telephone membership corporation shall not be eligible to receive a permanent registration plate issued under G.S. 20-84."

SECTION 3. Except for State entities issued permanent registration plates under G.S. 20-84(b)(1), the Division of Motor Vehicles shall cancel all permanent registration plates issued to non-State entities and reissue permanent registration plates with a new design to eligible non-State entities by January 15, 2013. The Division shall determine the new design of the permanent registration plates reissued to eligible non-State entities.

SECTION 4. This act becomes effective July 1, 2012.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 28th day of June,
2012.

s/ Walter H. Dalton
President of the Senate

s/ Thom Tillis
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
Governor

Approved 4:21 p.m. this 12th day of July, 2012