



HOUSE BILL 435: Special Registration Plates.

2021-2022 General Assembly

Committee:	House Finance. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	May 4, 2021
Introduced by:	Rep. Iler	Prepared by:	Trina Griffin
Analysis of:	Second Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: House Bill 435 would authorize the Division of Motor Vehicles to produce the following five new special registration plates, for which the organizations requesting the plates have completed the statutory plate development process:

- *Special Olympics NC (HB 430)*
- *NC Assoc. of Fire Chiefs (HB 432)*
- *A Pet is Family (HB 435)*
- *Home of the Venus Flytrap (HB 465)*
- *Electric Vehicle (HB 466)*

CURRENT LAW: North Carolina offers several special registration plates. Upon application and payment of the required registration fees, a person may obtain from the Division of Motor Vehicles a special registration plate for a motor vehicle registered in that person's name if the person qualifies for the plate. The issuance of most authorized plates is contingent upon the receipt by the Division of at least 300 applications for the particular plate, or 500 applications for full-color background plates.

As a general rule, the fee for a special registration plate is the regular vehicle registration fee plus a \$10 special registration plate fee. The \$10 special registration plate fee is credited to the Special Registration Plate Account. After deducting the cost of the plates from this account, \$1.3 million is appropriated to provide operating assistance for Visitor Centers. The remaining revenue in the account is transferred quarterly to the Department of Transportation for highway beautification (50%) and the Highway Fund for the Roadside Vegetation Management Program (50%). The cost of some special plates includes a fee in addition to the \$10 special registration plate fee. In those instances, the first \$10 goes to the special registration plate fund and the remainder is transferred quarterly to designated beneficiaries.

In 2014, the General Assembly enacted legislation creating a development process for special registration plates, which requires the organization desiring the plate to submit the required number of paid applications to the Division before legislation is introduced to authorize the plate. Once legislation has passed, the organization must submit the final artwork and list of paid applicants to the Division within 60 days, or the authorization expires.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 435 would authorize the Division to produce five new special registration plates as follows:

- **A Pet Is Family** – A standard background plate with a picture of a paw print and the phrase "My Pet Is Family". The fee would be \$15, with \$5 going to The Sergei Foundation, Inc. to further its mission of saving companion pets' lives by coordinating care for sick and injured dogs and cats and providing families with resources to obtain life-saving veterinary care.

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- **Electric Vehicle** – A full color background plate with a background in two different shades of blue with the phrase "Electric Vehicle" across the top and "North Carolina" across the bottom and a logo picturing a vehicle and a lightning bolt. There would be no fee in addition to the special plate fee of \$10.
- **Home of the Venus Flytrap** – A full color background plate with a picture of a Venus Flytrap and the phrase "Home of the Venus Flytrap". The fee would be \$30, with \$20 going to the North Carolina Botanical Garden Foundation, Inc., to be used to support plant conservation and research.
- **North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs** – A full color background plate with a black background with a red line and the phrase "NC Fire Officer" across the top, the phrase "North Carolina" along the bottom, the Association of Fire Chiefs logo on the left side, and the letters "FO" on the right side. The fee would be \$30, with \$20 going to the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs to be used for education programs for North Carolina firefighters.
- **Special Olympics North Carolina** – A standard background plate with the Special Olympics North Carolina logo. The fee would be \$25, with \$15 going to Special Olympics North Carolina to be used to fund athletic programs in North Carolina.

Each of the organizations requesting these plates has completed the requirements of the plate development process, including submitting the required number of paid applications for the plate, as reported by the Division of Motor Vehicles.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The act would become effective July 1, 2021.

Wendy Ray, Staff Attorney, substantially contributed to this summary.