

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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SENATE BILL 426

Transportation Committee Substitute Adopted 4/22/97

Finance Committee Substitute #2 Adopted 5/19/97

House Committee Substitute Favorable 7/7/97

House Committee Substitute #2 Favorable 8/11/97

Short Title: Magistrates/Truck Special Plates.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 19, 1997

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE SPECIAL REGISTRATION LICENSE PLATES ON
2 CERTAIN COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES, TO PROVIDE SPECIAL
3 REGISTRATION LICENSE PLATES FOR MAGISTRATES, TO ADVANCE THE
4 DATE FOR ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL REGISTRATION LICENSE PLATES FOR
5 SHERIFFS, AND TO PLACE A MORATORIUM ON THE CREATION OF ANY
6 MORE SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES UNTIL THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
7 COMMISSION HAS COMPLETED ITS STUDY OF SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES.

8 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

9 Section 1. G.S. 20-63(b), as amended by S.L. 1997-36, reads as rewritten:

10 "(b) Every license plate shall have displayed upon it the registration number
11 assigned to the vehicle for which it is issued, the name of the State of North Carolina,
12 which may be abbreviated, and the year number for which it is issued or the date of
13 ~~expiration, expiration, and, if the A plate is issued for a commercial vehicle, as defined in~~
14 ~~G.S. 20-4.2(1), must bear the word 'commercial,' designating 'commercial vehicle.'~~ The
15 ~~Division may not issue a plate bearing the word 'commercial' for a trailer, or a vehicle unless the~~
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1 plate is a special registration plate authorized in G.S. 20-79.4 or the commercial vehicle
2 is a trailer or is licensed for 6,000 pounds or less.

3 A registration plate issued by the Division for a private passenger vehicle or for a
4 private hauler vehicle licensed for 6,000 pounds or less shall be a 'First in Flight' plate. A
5 'First in Flight' plate shall have the words 'First in Flight' printed at the top of the plate
6 above all other letters and numerals. The background of the plate shall depict the Wright
7 Brothers biplane flying over Kitty Hawk Beach, with the plane flying slightly upward and
8 to the right."

9 Section 2. G.S. 20-79.4(a) reads as rewritten:

10 "(a) General. – Upon application and payment of the required registration fees, a
11 person may obtain from the Division a special registration plate for a motor vehicle
12 registered in that person's name if the person qualifies for the registration plate. A special
13 registration ~~plate, with the exception of a personalized registration plate,~~ plate may not be
14 issued for a vehicle registered under the International Registration Plan. ~~Plan or for a~~
15 commercial truck. ~~A special registration plate may be issued for a commercial vehicle that~~
16 is not registered under the International Registration Plan. A holder of a special
17 registration plate who becomes ineligible for the plate, for whatever reason, must return
18 the special plate within 30 days."

19 Section 3. G.S. 20-79.4(b) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

20 "(14a) Magistrate. – Issuable to a North Carolina magistrate. The plate shall
21 bear the letters 'MJ' followed by a number indicating the district court
22 district the magistrate serves, then by a hyphen, and then by a number
23 indicating the seniority of the magistrate. The Division shall use the
24 number '9' to designate District Court Districts 9 and 9B."

25 Section 4. Section 2 of S.L. 1997-158 reads as rewritten:

26 "Section 2. This act ~~becomes effective December 1, 1997.~~ is effective when it becomes
27 law."

28 Section 5. The General Assembly finds that the number of special license
29 plates has substantially increased since 1990. The proliferation of new special license
30 plates raises issues about the types of plates the State may issue and the amount and
31 distribution of funds derived from the plates. For this reason, House Bill 9 authorizes the
32 Legislative Research Commission to study the number and types of special registration
33 plates issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles and the amount and distribution of funds
34 derived from the issuance of those plates. The Commission will report the results of this
35 study, including any legislative recommendations, to the 1998 Session of the 1997
36 General Assembly. It is the intent and purpose of this section to assure that the General
37 Assembly will not enact legislation authorizing the issuance of any more special license
38 plates until the completion of this study.

39 Section 6. Sections 1 and 2 of this act become effective January 1, 1998, and
40 apply to registration plates issued for periods beginning on or after that date. Section 5 of
41 this act becomes effective September 1, 1997. The remaining sections of this act are
42 effective when this act becomes law.