

House Bill 1053

By: Representatives Mills of the 25<sup>th</sup>, Rice of the 51<sup>st</sup>, Ehrhart of the 36<sup>th</sup>, Keen of the 179<sup>th</sup>, Fleming of the 117<sup>th</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 3 of Chapter 2 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to prestige license plates and special plates for certain persons and vehicles, so as to  
3 provide for a special license plate promoting the national motto, "In God We Trust"; to  
4 provide for a portion of the revenue to go to the Boy Scouts of America; to provide for  
5 issuance, renewal, fees, licensing agreements, applications, and transfers relative to such  
6 special license plates; to provide for related matters; to provide a contingent effective date;  
7 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Article 3 of Chapter 2 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
11 prestige license plates and special plates for certain persons and vehicles, is amended by  
12 adding a new Code Section 40-2-86.18 to read as follows:

13 "40-2-86.18.

14 (a) The commissioner, in cooperation with supporters of this license plate, shall design a  
15 special license plate to be issued displaying the national motto, 'In God We Trust.' The  
16 license plates must be of the same size as general issue motor vehicle license plates and  
17 shall include a unique design and identifying number, whereby the total number of  
18 characters does not exceed six. It shall not be a requirement that a county name decal shall  
19 be fixed and displayed on license plates issued under this Code section. The graphic on the  
20 special license plate shall be placed to the left of the alphanumeric characters and shall be  
21 no larger than three inches by three inches.

22 (b) Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this Code section, this Code section shall  
23 not be implemented until such time as the State of Georgia has, through a licensing  
24 agreement or otherwise, received such licenses or other permissions as may be required to  
25 implement this Code section. The design of the initial edition of the 'In God We Trust'  
26 license plates, as well as the design of subsequent editions and excepting only any part or

1 parts of the designs owned by others and licensed to the state, shall be owned solely by the  
2 State of Georgia for its exclusive use and control, except as authorized by the  
3 commissioner. The commissioner may take such steps as may be necessary to give notice  
4 of and protect such right, including the copyright or copyrights. However, such steps shall  
5 be cumulative of the ownership and exclusive use and control established by this  
6 subsection as a matter of law, and no person shall reproduce or otherwise use such design  
7 or designs, except as authorized by the commissioner.

8 (c) Beginning on July 1, 2007, any Georgia resident who is the owner of a motor vehicle,  
9 except a vehicle registered under the International Registration Plan, upon complying with  
10 the motor vehicle laws relating to registration and licensing of motor vehicles and upon the  
11 payment of a fee of \$25.00 in addition to the regular motor vehicle registration fee, shall  
12 be issued an 'In God We Trust' license plate. Special license plates issued under this Code  
13 section shall be renewed annually with a revalidation decal as provided in Code Section  
14 40-2-31 upon payment of an additional \$25.00 annual registration fee, which fee shall be  
15 collected by the county tag agent at the time of collection of other registration fees and  
16 remitted to the state as provided in Code Section 40-2-34.

17 (d) An applicant may request an 'In God We Trust' license plate any time during the  
18 applicant's registration period. If such a license plate is to replace a current valid license  
19 plate, the license plate shall be issued with appropriate decals attached.

20 (e) The manufacturing fee derived from the sale of 'In God We Trust' license plates shall  
21 be apportioned as follows: \$2.00 to the department, \$13.00 to be deposited into the general  
22 fund, and \$10.00 to the Boy Scouts of America for the development of scouting programs  
23 as provided by Article III, Section IX, Paragraph VI(n) of the Constitution.

24 (f) No special license plate authorized pursuant to this Code section shall be issued except  
25 upon the receipt of at least 1,000 applications. The special license plate shall have an  
26 application period of two years after January 1, 2007, for payment of the manufacturing  
27 fee. After such time if the minimum number of applications is not met, the department  
28 shall not continue to accept the manufacturing fee, and all fees shall be refunded to  
29 applicants.

30 (g) The department shall not be required to continue to manufacture the special license  
31 plate if the number of active registrations falls below 500 registrations at any time during  
32 the five-year period as provided in subsection (b) of Code Section 40-2-31. A current  
33 registrant may continue to renew such special license plate during his or her annual  
34 registration period upon payment of an additional \$25.00 annual special tag fee, which fee  
35 shall be collected by the county tag agent at the time of collection of other registration fees  
36 and shall be remitted to the state as provided in Code Section 40-2-34. The department  
37 may continue to issue such special license plates that it has in its inventory to assist in

1 achieving the minimum number of registrations. If the special license plate falls below 500  
2 active registrations at any time during the five-year period as provided in subsection (b) of  
3 Code Section 40-2-31, manufacture of the license plates shall not be continued until the  
4 commissioner receives 1,000 applications.

5 (h) 'In God We Trust' license plates shall be transferred from one vehicle to another  
6 vehicle in accordance with the provisions of Code Section 40-2-42.

7 (i) 'In God We Trust' license plates shall be issued within 30 days of application."

8 **SECTION 2.**

9 (a) This Act shall become effective on January 1, 2007, except as otherwise provided in  
10 subsection (b) of this section.

11 (b) If an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Georgia authorizing the donation of  
12 revenue from sales of special license plates to the Boy Scouts of America is not ratified at  
13 the general election in 2006, this Act shall be repealed in its entirety on January 1, 2007, and  
14 no such motor vehicle license plates shall be issued pursuant to this Act.

15 **SECTION 3.**

16 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.