

House Bill 1125

By: Representatives Day of the 163rd, Amerson of the 9th, Yates of the 73rd, Talton of the 145th, and Murphy of the 23rd

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 honoring members of the merchant marine; to provide for
4 issuance, renewal, fees, licensing agreements, applications, and transfers relative to such
5 special license plates; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for
6 other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

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

12 "40-2-86.18.

13 (a) There shall be issued beginning July 1, 2007, special license plates honoring members
14 of the merchant marine. All of these men and women have sacrificed a portion of their
15 lives in order to serve their country and protect our freedom.

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

24 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this Code section, this
25 Code section shall not be implemented until such time as the State of Georgia has, through
26 a licensing agreement or otherwise, received such license or other permission as may be

1 required to implement this Code section. The design of the initial edition of such special
2 license plate, as well as the design of subsequent editions and excepting only any part or
3 parts of the designs owned by others and licensed to the state, shall be owned solely by the
4 State of Georgia for its exclusive use and control, except as authorized by the
5 commissioner. The commissioner may take such steps as may be necessary to give notice
6 of and protect such right, including the copyright or copyrights. However, such steps shall
7 be cumulative of the ownership and exclusive use and control established by this
8 subsection as a matter of law, and no person shall reproduce or otherwise use such design
9 or designs, except as authorized by the commissioner.

10 (d) On and after January 1, 2007, any motor vehicle owner who is a resident of Georgia,
11 other than one registering under the International Registration Plan, upon complying with
12 state laws relating to registration and licensing of motor vehicles and payment of a
13 manufacturing fee of \$25.00 in addition to the regular motor vehicle registration fee, shall
14 be issued such a special license plate upon application therefor. Special license plates
15 issued under this Code section shall be renewed annually with a revalidation decal as
16 provided in Code Section 40-2-31 upon payment of an additional \$25.00 annual
17 registration fee, which fee shall be collected by the county tag agent at the time of
18 collection of other registration fees and remitted to the state as provided in Code Section
19 40-2-34.

20 (e) An applicant may request a merchant marine license plate any time during the
21 applicant's registration period. If such a license plate is to replace a current valid license
22 plate, the license plate shall be issued with appropriate decals attached.

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

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

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

4 (h) License plates issued pursuant to this Code section shall be transferred between
5 vehicles as provided in Code Section 40-2-42.

6 (i) Merchant marine license plates shall be issued within 30 days of application."

7 **SECTION 2.**

8 This Act shall become effective on January 1, 2007.

9 **SECTION 3.**

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