

Senate Bill 540

By: Senators Staton of the 18th, Douglas of the 17th, Whitehead, Sr. of the 24th, Goggans of the 7th, Wiles of the 37th 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 special license plates promoting our nation's heritage in Georgia; to provide for  
4 issuance, renewal, fees, licensing agreements, applications, transfers, and disposition of funds  
5 relative to such license plates; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date;  
6 to repeal conflicting laws; and for 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 promoting our  
14 American heritage in Georgia and recognizing the tremendous impact faith and family has  
15 had on the economy and culture of the State of Georgia, subject to the conditions set forth  
16 in this Code section.

17 (b) The commissioner, in cooperation with representatives from the faith-based  
18 community in Georgia, shall design special distinctive license plates appropriate to  
19 promote our family and faith-based heritage in Georgia. The license plates shall contain  
20 the language 'In God We Trust.' The license plates shall be of the same size as general  
21 issue motor vehicle license plates and shall include a unique design and identifying  
22 number, whereby the total number of characters does not exceed six. No two recipients  
23 shall receive identically numbered plates. The graphic on the special license plate shall be  
24 placed to the left of the alphanumeric characters and shall be no larger than three inches by  
25 three inches.

1 (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this Code section, this Code section  
2 shall not be implemented until such time as the State of Georgia has, through a licensing  
3 agreement or otherwise, received any licenses or other permissions that may be required  
4 to implement this Code section. The design of the initial edition of the faith and family  
5 license plates, as well as the design of subsequent editions and excepting only any part or  
6 parts of the designs owned by others and licensed to the state, shall be owned solely by the  
7 State of Georgia for its exclusive use and control, except as authorized by the  
8 commissioner. The commissioner may take such steps as may be necessary to give notice  
9 of and protect such right, including the copyright or copyrights. However, such steps shall  
10 be cumulative of the ownership and exclusive use and control established by this  
11 subsection as a matter of law, and no person shall reproduce or otherwise use such design  
12 or designs, except as authorized by the commissioner.

13 (d) Beginning in July, 2007, any Georgia resident who is the owner of a motor vehicle,  
14 except a vehicle registered under the International Registration Plan, upon complying with  
15 the motor vehicle laws relating to registration and licensing of motor vehicles and upon the  
16 payment of a manufacturing fee of \$25.00 in addition to the regular motor vehicle  
17 registration fee shall be issued a faith and family license plate. Revalidation decals shall  
18 be issued for such license plates in the same manner as provided for general issue license  
19 plates.

20 (e) The manufacturing fee derived from the issuance and renewal of the faith and family  
21 license plates authorized under this Code section shall be apportioned as follows: \$2.00  
22 shall be used by the department for manufacturing and purchase costs and \$23.00 shall be  
23 paid to the general fund of the state treasury. As soon as practicable after December 31 of  
24 each year, the commissioner shall report the total number of such special license plates that  
25 were issued or renewed during the preceding year to the Office of Planning and Budget and  
26 the Department of Veterans Service. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the  
27 General Assembly appropriate an amount equal to \$10.00 per such license plate issued or  
28 renewed in any year to be made available during the following fiscal year to the  
29 Department of Veterans Service. The Department of Veterans Service shall utilize the  
30 funds so appropriated to provide for programs for assisting Georgia veterans.

31 (f) An applicant may request a faith and family license plate any time during the  
32 applicant's registration period. If such a license plate is to replace a current valid license  
33 plate, the faith and family license plate shall be issued with appropriate decals attached.

34 (g) No special license plate authorized pursuant to this Code section shall be issued except  
35 upon the application of at least 1,000 applications. The special license plate shall have an  
36 application period of two years after January 1, 2007, for payment of the manufacturing  
37 fee. After such time, if the minimum number of applications is not met, the department

1 shall not continue to accept the manufacturing fee, and all fees shall be refunded to  
2 applicants.

3 (h) The department shall not be required to continue to manufacture the special license  
4 plate if the number of active registrations falls below 500 registrations at any time during  
5 the period as provided in subsection (b) of Code Section 40-2-31. A current registrant may  
6 continue to renew such special license plate during his or her annual registration period  
7 upon payment of an additional \$25.00 annual special tag fee, which fee shall be collected  
8 by the county tag agent at the time of collection of other registration fees and shall be  
9 remitted to the state as provided in Code Section 40-2-34. The department may continue  
10 to issue such special license plates that it has in its inventory to assist in achieving the  
11 minimum number of registrations. If the special license plate falls below 500 active  
12 registrations at any time during the period as provided in subsection (b) of Code Section  
13 40-2-31, its supporters shall be required again to obtain 1,000 applications accompanied  
14 by the manufacturing fee to continue the manufacture of the special license plate.

15 (i) The faith and family license plates shall be transferred from one vehicle to another  
16 vehicle in accordance with the provisions of Code Section 40-2-80.

17 (j) The faith and family license plates shall be issued within 30 days of application once  
18 the requirements of this Code section have been met."

19 **SECTION 2.**

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

21 **SECTION 3.**

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