

Senate Bill 76

By: Senators Echols of the 49th, Kirkpatrick of the 32nd, Payne of the 54th, Brass of the 6th, Summers of the 13th and others

AS PASSED

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to motor vehicles, so
2 as to provide for additional military medal awards eligible for special veteran license plates;
3 to provide for a specialty license plate for United States Navy submarine service members;
4 to authorize the operation of multipurpose off-highway vehicles on certain highways; to
5 provide for related matters; to provide 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 Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to motor vehicles, is amended
10 in Code Section 40-2-85.1, relating to license plates for certain veterans, by revising
11 paragraph (1) of subsection (a), subparagraph (b)(2)(B), and subsections (e.1) and (f) as
12 follows:

13 "(1) 'Military medal award' means the following medals, decorations, or other recognition
14 of honor for military service awarded by a branch of the United States military:

15 (A) Medal of Honor;

16 (B) Bronze Star Medal;

17 (C) Silver Star Medal;

- 18 (D) Distinguished Service Cross;
 19 (E) Navy Cross;
 20 (F) Air Force Cross;
 21 (G) Defense Distinguished Service Medal;
 22 (H) Homeland Security Distinguished Service Medal;
 23 (I) Distinguished Service Medal;
 24 (J) Navy Distinguished Service Medal;
 25 (K) Air Force Distinguished Service Medal;
 26 (L) Coast Guard Distinguished Service Medal;
 27 (M) Defense Superior Service Medal;
 28 (N) Legion of Merit;
 29 (O) Distinguished Flying Cross;
 30 (P) Purple Heart;
 31 (Q) Air Medal;
 32 (R) Soldier's Medal; and
 33 (S) Meritorious Service Medal;
 34 (T) Navy Corps Medal;
 35 (U) Marine Corps Medal;
 36 (V) Airman's Medal;
 37 (W) Coast Guard Medal; and
 38 (X) Combat Infantryman Badge."
 39 "(B) Each member or former member of the armed forces of the United States listed
 40 in this subsection shall be entitled to no more than one such free license plate at a time;
 41 provided, however, that, upon payment of a manufacturing fee of \$25.00, a member
 42 shall be entitled to one additional such license plate. For each additional license plate
 43 for which a \$25.00 manufacturing fee is required, there shall be an additional annual
 44 registration fee of \$25.00, ~~and such fee~~ as a condition of obtaining an annual renewal

45 of a registration or an additional registration fee of \$125.00 as a condition of obtaining
 46 a five-year renewal of registration for such license plate. The fee required by this
 47 subparagraph shall be collected by the county tag agent at the time of collection of other
 48 registration fees and shall be remitted to the state as provided in Code Section 40-2-34."

49 ~~"(e.1)(f)~~ The spouse of any person eligible to be issued a special license plate under this
 50 Code section shall also be eligible for such license plate, provided that no motor vehicle
 51 is registered in the name of the eligible person and all other requirements relating to
 52 registration and licensing relative to motor vehicles as prescribed in Article 2 of this
 53 chapter have been satisfied.

54 ~~(f)(g)~~ Special license plates issued under this Code section, except as provided in
 55 subparagraph (b)(2)(A) of this Code section, shall be ~~renewed annually with a revalidation~~
 56 ~~decal as provided in Code Section 40-2-31 without payment of an additional \$25.00 annual~~
 57 ~~registration fee subject to an additional annual registration fee of \$25.00 as a condition of~~
 58 obtaining an annual renewal of a registration or an additional registration fee of \$125.00
 59 as a condition of obtaining a five-year renewal of registration for such license plate. The
 60 fee required by this Code section shall be collected by the county tag agent at the time of
 61 collection of other registration fees and shall be remitted to the state as provided in Code
 62 Section 40-2-34."

63 SECTION 2.

64 Said title is further amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

65 "40-2-85.5.

66 (a)(1) Motor vehicle owners who are members of the United States Navy submarine
 67 service shall be eligible to receive special and distinctive vehicle license plates for private
 68 passenger cars, trucks, motorcycles, or recreational vehicles used for personal
 69 transportation. Such license plates shall be issued in compliance with the state motor

70 vehicle laws relating to registration and licensing of motor vehicles as prescribed in
71 Article 2 of this chapter.

72 (2) Motor vehicle owners who are retired members of the United States Navy submarine
73 service shall be eligible to receive special and distinctive vehicle license plates for private
74 passenger cars, trucks, motorcycles, or recreational vehicles used for personal
75 transportation. Such license plates shall be issued in compliance with the state motor
76 vehicle laws relating to registration and licensing of motor vehicles as prescribed in
77 Article 2 of this chapter.

78 (3) The special and distinctive vehicle license plates issued pursuant to paragraph (2) of
79 this subsection shall contain the word 'RETIRED' in the location of and in lieu of the
80 name of the county of issuance.

81 (b) A person who qualifies for the special and distinctive license plate pursuant to
82 subsection (a) of this Code section shall make application therefor with the commissioner
83 and include the requisite fee. The commissioner shall design a distinctive license plate as
84 provided in subsection (c) of this Code section and issue the distinctive license plates to
85 qualifying applicants. There shall be no minimum required number of applicants for such
86 distinctive license plate. The commissioner shall promulgate such rules and regulations
87 as may be necessary to enforce compliance with all state license laws relating to the use
88 and operation of private passenger cars and trucks before issuing these license plates in lieu
89 of the regular Georgia license plates. The additional manufacturing fee for such special
90 and distinctive license plates shall be \$25.00. The commissioner is specifically authorized
91 to promulgate all rules and regulations necessary to ensure compliance in instances where
92 such vehicles have been transferred or sold.

93 (c) The special and distinctive vehicle license plates issued by this Code section shall be
94 as prescribed in Article 2 of this chapter for private passenger cars, trucks, motorcycles, or
95 recreational vehicles used for personal transportation, except that the commissioner shall

96 include a special design to identify the owner as a member of the United States Navy
97 submarine service.
98 (d) The license plate issued pursuant to this Code section shall be transferred between
99 vehicles as provided in Code Section 40-2-80."

100 **SECTION 3.**

101 Said title is further amended in Code Section 40-6-362, relating to operating low-speed and
102 multipurpose off-highway vehicles on highways, by revising subsection (b) as follows:

103 ~~"(b) Multipurpose off-highway vehicles shall be operated only on highways that are part~~
104 ~~of a county road system and shall be authorized to cross highways that are part of a~~
105 ~~municipal street system or are part of the state highway system~~ only be authorized to be
106 operated on highways with a maximum speed limit of 60 miles per hour or less."

107 **SECTION 4.**

108 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2027.

109 **SECTION 5.**

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