

SENATE SUBSTITUTE TO HB 208

ADOPTED SENATE

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 the issuance of two free license plates for veterans who are totally disabled or
4 disabled; to provide for application; to provide for conforming changes; to establish a
5 specialty license plate honoring the Shepherd Center; to establish a specialty license plate
6 benefiting the Georgia Veterans Service Foundation; to establish a specialty license plate
7 honoring Southern University Alumni; to establish a specialty license plate honoring Delta
8 Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; to establish a specialty license plate honoring alumni of Alabama
9 State University; to establish a specialty license plate supporting the state parks and historic
10 sites division of the Department of Natural Resources; to establish a specialty license plate
11 promoting conservation and enhancement of black bass populations; to provide for related
12 matters; to provide for effective dates; to provide for compliance with constitutional
13 requirements; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

15 **SECTION 1.**

16 Article 3 of Chapter 2 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
17 prestige license plates and special plates for certain persons and vehicles, is amended by
18 revising Code Section 40-2-69, relating to license plates for veterans qualifying as totally
19 disabled, as follows:

20 "40-2-69.

21 ~~(a) Any disabled veteran who is a citizen and resident of this state shall, upon application~~
22 ~~therefor, be issued a free motor vehicle license plate.~~ As used in this Code section, the
23 term 'disabled veteran' shall have the same meaning as that term is defined in 'totally
24 disabled veteran' means an individual who qualifies as a disabled veteran pursuant to
25 paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 48-5-48.

26 (b) Any totally disabled veteran shall, upon proper application therefor, be issued a free
27 motor vehicle license ~~plate~~ plates for up to two motorcycles or passenger cars for personal
28 use registered pursuant to this chapter in his or her name upon presentation of proof that
29 he or she qualifies as a totally disabled veteran. A totally disabled veteran ~~who claims that~~
30 ~~his or her disability is permanent~~ applying for license plates pursuant to this Code section
31 shall furnish proof of such ~~permanent~~ disability through a letter from the United States
32 Department of Veterans Affairs.

33 (c)(1) Once a totally disabled veteran has established his or her eligibility to receive free
34 motor vehicle license plates ~~as a result of being permanently disabled pursuant to this~~
35 Code section, he or she shall be entitled to receive free license plates or free revalidation
36 decals in succeeding years ~~on any automobile, private passenger pickup truck,~~
37 ~~motorcycle, station wagon, or van type vehicle of three-quarter tons or less~~ for up to two
38 motorcycles or passenger cars for personal use registered pursuant to this chapter that he
39 or she may own or jointly with his or her spouse or minor child own or acquire in the
40 future.

41 ~~(2) Once a disabled veteran has established his or her eligibility to receive free motor~~
42 ~~vehicle license plates but his or her disability has not been determined to be a permanent~~

43 ~~disability, he or she shall be entitled to receive free plates or free revalidation decals in~~
 44 ~~succeeding years upon furnishing, on an annual basis, proof of his or her status as a~~
 45 ~~disabled veteran through a letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.~~
 46 ~~Such free plates or free revalidation decals shall apply to any automobile, private~~
 47 ~~passenger pickup truck, motorcycle, station wagon, or van type vehicle of three-quarter~~
 48 ~~tons or less that he or she may own or jointly with his or her spouse or minor child own~~
 49 ~~or acquire in the future.~~

50 ~~(3)(2)(A)~~ Up to two ~~Two~~ license plates or revalidation decals each year shall be
 51 furnished for motor vehicles other than motorcycles to totally disabled veterans
 52 qualifying under this Code section unless the originals are lost. Such ~~plates~~ license
 53 plate shall be fastened to ~~both the front and~~ the rear of the motor vehicle.

54 ~~(B)~~ Up to two license plates or revalidation decals ~~One license plate or revalidation~~
 55 ~~decals~~ each year shall be furnished for motorcycles to totally disabled veterans
 56 qualifying under this Code section unless the original is lost. Such license plate shall
 57 be fastened to the rear of the motor vehicle.

58 ~~(4)(3)~~ In the event of the death of the person who received the special license plates
 59 pursuant to this Code section, upon complying with the motor vehicle laws relating to
 60 registration and licensing of motor vehicles, his or her unremarried surviving spouse or
 61 minor child may continue to receive the free special license plates authorized by this
 62 Code section and revalidation decals until the remarriage of the surviving spouse or death
 63 of the surviving spouse or minor child."

64 **SECTION 2.**

65 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 40-2-70, relating to license plates
 66 for veterans not qualifying as totally disabled, as follows:

67 "40-2-70.

68 (a) Any citizen and resident of ~~the State of Georgia~~ this state who has been discharged
69 from the armed forces under conditions other than dishonorable or who is currently serving
70 in the armed forces, who is disabled ~~to any degree specified and enumerated in Code~~
71 ~~Section 40-2-69, and who is the owner of a private passenger motor vehicle, but who~~
72 ~~cannot qualify under~~ but does not qualify as totally disabled pursuant to paragraph (1) of
73 subsection (a) of Code Section 48-5-48 for purposes of qualification for a license plate
74 issued pursuant to Code Section 40-2-69, shall be entitled to a special and distinctive
75 ~~automobile license plate~~ license plates for up to two motorcycles or passenger cars for
76 personal use registered pursuant to this chapter in his or her name. Such license ~~plate~~
77 ~~plates~~ shall be transferred to another vehicle acquired by such veteran or jointly by such
78 veteran and his or her spouse as provided in Code Section 40-2-80. Such veteran shall be
79 entitled to ~~such plate~~ license plates issued pursuant to this Code section regardless of
80 whether he or she is suffering from a service connected or nonservice connected disability.

81 (b) Upon proper application and ~~Such veteran must apply for such license plate and, upon~~
82 compliance with the state motor vehicle laws for licensing of motor vehicles and without
83 payment of the regular license fee for plates as prescribed under Article 7 of this chapter,
84 ~~such veteran a disabled veteran who does not qualify for license plates pursuant to Code~~
85 ~~Section 40-2-69 shall be issued similar license plates as prescribed in Code Section 40-2-71~~
86 ~~for private passenger cars up to two motorcycles or passenger cars for personal use. There~~
87 ~~shall be no charge for the additional plate issued such veteran under this Code section.~~
88 There shall be no charge for revalidation decals for ~~such plates~~ license plates issued
89 pursuant to this Code section.

90 (c) For purposes of applying for license plates issued pursuant to this Code section, If a
91 veteran who has not been certified as disabled by the United States Department of Veterans
92 Affairs, ~~such veteran~~ may submit to the Department of Veterans Service such veteran's
93 discharge papers and a certified statement from a physician, licensed under Chapter 34 of
94 Title 43, certifying that, in the opinion of such physician, such veteran is disabled ~~to a~~

95 ~~degree enumerated in Code Section 40-2-69.~~ If the certificate from the physician indicates
96 the qualifying disabilities ~~which~~ meet the standards of the United States Department of
97 Veterans Affairs, the commissioner of veterans service shall submit a letter to the state
98 revenue commissioner indicating that the veteran meets the requirements of this Code
99 section and qualifies for a special license ~~plate~~ plates as provided in this Code section.

100 (d) Once a disabled veteran has established his or her eligibility to receive free motor
101 vehicle license plates pursuant to this Code section but his or her disability has not been
102 determined to be a permanent disability, he or she shall be entitled to receive free license
103 plates or free revalidation decals in succeeding years upon furnishing, on an annual basis,
104 proof of his or her status as a disabled veteran through a letter from the United States
105 Department of Veterans Affairs. Such free license plates or free revalidation decals shall
106 be for up to two motorcycles or passenger cars for personal use registered pursuant to this
107 chapter that he or she may own or jointly with his or her spouse or minor child own or
108 acquire in the future."

109

SECTION 3.

110 Said article is further amended by revising Code Section 40-2-71, relating to design of
111 disabled veteran license plates and restrictions on issuance and transfer, as follows:

112 "40-2-71.

113 (a) The commissioner is directed to furnish the license plates provided for in Code
114 Sections 40-2-69 and 40-2-70. Such plates shall be printed in three colors: red, white, and
115 blue. The commissioner is authorized and directed to design the license plate. Each
116 license plate shall contain, in bold characters, the name of the state, or abbreviation thereof,
117 the year, the serial number, either the words 'Disabled Veteran' or 'Disabled Vet,' and an
118 image of the International Symbol of Access which is at least one inch in height and is
119 white on a blue background.

120 (b) ~~Such license plates so issued shall be transferred to another vehicle as provided in~~
121 ~~Code Section 40-2-80.~~
122 (c) No disabled veteran shall be entitled to own or operate more than ~~one vehicle~~ two
123 vehicles with the free license plates provided by Code Sections 40-2-69, 40-2-70, and this
124 Code section."

125 **SECTION 4.**

126 Said article is further amended in Code Section 40-2-86, relating to special license plates
127 promoting or supporting certain worthy agencies, funds, or nonprofit corporations with
128 proceeds disbursed to the general fund and the agency, fund, or nonprofit corporation, by
129 adding a new paragraph to subsection (l) to read as follows:

130 "(71) A special license plate honoring the Shepherd Center. The funds raised by the sale
131 of this special license plate shall be disbursed to Shepherd Center, Inc."

132 **SECTION 5.**

133 Said article is further amended in said Code section by adding new paragraphs to subsections
134 (l), (m), and (n) to read as follows:

135 "(72) A special license plate honoring Georgia veterans and their families. The funds
136 raised by the sale of this special license plate shall be disbursed to the Georgia Veterans
137 Service Foundation.

138 (73) A special license plate honoring Southern University Alumni. The funds raised by
139 the sale of this special license plate shall be disbursed to the Atlanta Metropolitan Chapter
140 of Southern University Alumni Federation of Georgia, Inc.

141 (74) A special license plate honoring Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. The funds raised
142 by the sale of this special license plate shall be disbursed to the Delta Life Development
143 Center.

144 (75) A special license plate honoring alumni of Alabama State University. The funds
145 raised by the sale of this special license plate shall be disbursed to the Alabama State
146 University Metro Atlanta Alumni Chapter."

147 "(18) A special license plate to support the state parks and historic sites division of the
148 Department of Natural Resources in its protection, management, and maintenance of this
149 state's natural, historical, and cultural resources while providing opportunities for public
150 enjoyment and education. The funds raised by the sale of this special license plate shall
151 be disbursed to the Department of Natural Resources for use by the state parks and
152 historic sites division for the purposes provided for in this paragraph. Such license plate
153 shall not include a space for a county name decal but shall instead bear the legend
154 'Georgia State Parks' in lieu of the name of the county of issuance."

155 "(10) A special license plate promoting conservation and enhancement of black bass
156 populations. The funds raised by the sale of this special license plate shall be disbursed
157 to the Georgia Natural Resources Foundation to supplement black bass research,
158 restoration, habitat improvement, stocking, and other management programs."

159 **SECTION 6.**

160 In accordance with the requirements of Article III, Section IX, Paragraph VI(n) of the
161 Constitution of the State of Georgia, this Act shall not become law unless it receives the
162 requisite two-thirds' majority vote in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

163 **SECTION 7.**

164 (a) Except as otherwise provided for in subsection (b) of this section, this Act shall become
165 effective on July 1, 2025.

166 (b) Sections 1, 2, 3, and 5 of this Act shall become effective on January 1, 2026.

167 **SECTION 8.**

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