

**As Reported by the House Homeland Security Committee**

**135th General Assembly**

**Regular Session**

**2023-2024**

**Sub. H. B. No. 194**

**Representative Miller, K.**

**Cosponsors: Representatives Ghanbari, Cross, LaRe, Abrams, Swearingen**

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**A BILL**

To amend sections 4503.038, 4503.19, and 5502.68 1  
and to enact sections 4503.261 and 4503.262 of 2  
the Revised Code to authorize a contract with a 3  
private vendor for the issuance of specialty 4  
license plates. 5

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:**

**Section 1.** That sections 4503.038, 4503.19, and 5502.68 be 6  
amended and sections 4503.261 and 4503.262 of the Revised Code 7  
be enacted to read as follows: 8

**Sec. 4503.038.** (A) ~~Not later than ninety days after the~~ 9  
~~effective date of this amendment, the~~The registrar of motor 10  
vehicles shall adopt rules in accordance with Chapter 119. of 11  
the Revised Code establishing a service fee that applies for 12  
purposes of sections 4503.03, 4503.036, 4503.042, 4503.10, 13  
4503.102, 4503.12, 4503.182, 4503.24, 4503.261, 4503.65, 14  
4505.061, 4506.08, 4507.24, 4507.50, 4507.52, 4509.05, 4519.03, 15  
4519.05, 4519.10, 4519.56, and 4519.69 of the Revised Code. The 16  
service fee shall be five dollars. 17

(B) ~~Not later than ninety days after the effective date of~~ 18

~~this amendment, the~~The registrar shall adopt rules in accordance 19  
with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code establishing prorated 20  
service fees that apply for purposes of multi-year registrations 21  
authorized under section 4503.103 of the Revised Code. 22

**Sec. 4503.19.** (A) (1) Upon the filing of an application for 23  
registration and the payment of the tax for registration, the 24  
registrar of motor vehicles or a deputy registrar shall 25  
determine whether the owner previously has been issued a license 26  
plate for the motor vehicle described in the application. If no 27  
license plate previously has been issued to the owner for that 28  
motor vehicle, the registrar or deputy registrar shall assign to 29  
the motor vehicle a distinctive number and issue and deliver to 30  
the owner in the manner that the registrar may select a 31  
certificate of registration, in the form that the registrar 32  
shall prescribe. The registrar or deputy registrar also shall 33  
charge the owner any fees required under division (C) of section 34  
4503.10 of the Revised Code and, if applicable, any fees and 35  
contribution required in accordance with section 4503.261 of the 36  
Revised Code. 37

(2) The registrar or deputy registrar then shall deliver a 38  
license plate and, when required, a validation sticker, or a 39  
validation sticker alone, to be attached to the number plate as 40  
provided in section 4503.191 of the Revised Code. 41

If an owner wishes to have two license plates, the 42  
registrar or deputy registrar shall deliver two license plates, 43  
duplicates of each other, and, when required, a validation 44  
sticker, or a validation sticker alone, to be attached to the 45  
number plates as provided in section 4503.191 of the Revised 46  
Code. The owner shall display the license plate and, when 47  
required, the validation sticker on the rear of the vehicle. 48

However, a commercial tractor shall display the license plate on 49  
the front of the commercial tractor and a chauffeured limousine 50  
shall display a livery sticker along with a validation sticker 51  
as provided in section 4503.24 of the Revised Code. 52

(3) The registrar or deputy registrar shall not issue a 53  
license plate for a school bus. A school bus shall display 54  
identifying numbers in the manner prescribed by section 4511.764 55  
of the Revised Code. 56

(4) The certificate of registration shall be issued and 57  
delivered to the owner in person, by mail, or by electronic 58  
delivery. The license plate and, when required, validation 59  
sticker, or validation sticker alone, shall be issued and 60  
delivered to the owner in person or by mail. 61

(5) In the event of the loss, mutilation, or destruction 62  
of any certificate of registration, or of any license plate or 63  
validation sticker, or if the owner chooses to replace a license 64  
plate previously issued for a motor vehicle, or if the 65  
registration certificate and license plate have been impounded 66  
as provided by division (B) (1) of section 4507.02 and section 67  
4507.16 of the Revised Code, the owner of a motor vehicle, or 68  
manufacturer or dealer, may obtain from the registrar, or from a 69  
deputy registrar if authorized by the registrar, a duplicate 70  
thereof or a new license plate bearing a different number, if 71  
the registrar considers it advisable, upon filing an application 72  
prescribed by the registrar, and upon paying a fee of one dollar 73  
for such certificate of registration. The registrar shall 74  
deposit the one dollar fee into the state treasury to the credit 75  
of the public safety - highway purposes fund created in section 76  
4501.06 of the Revised Code. The registrar or deputy registrar 77  
shall charge a fee of seven dollars and fifty cents for each set 78

of two license plates or six dollars and fifty cents for each 79  
single license plate or validation sticker issued, which the 80  
registrar shall deposit into the state treasury to the credit of 81  
the public safety - highway purposes fund. 82

(6) Each applicant for a replacement certificate of 83  
registration, license plate, or validation sticker also shall 84  
pay the fees provided in divisions (C) and (D) of section 85  
4503.10 of the Revised Code ~~and~~, any applicable fee under 86  
section 4503.192 of the Revised Code, and any applicable fee or 87  
contribution under section 4503.261 of the Revised Code. 88

Additionally, the registrar and each deputy registrar who 89  
either issues a license plate and a validation sticker for use 90  
on any vehicle other than a commercial tractor, semitrailer, or 91  
apportioned vehicle, or who issues a validation sticker alone 92  
for use on such a vehicle and the owner has changed the owner's 93  
county of residence since the owner last was issued a county 94  
identification sticker, also shall issue and deliver to the 95  
owner a county identification sticker, which shall be attached 96  
to the license plate in a manner prescribed by the director of 97  
public safety. The county identification sticker shall identify 98  
prominently by name or number the county in which the owner of 99  
the vehicle resides at the time of registration. 100

(B) A certificate of registration issued under this 101  
section shall have a portion that contains all the information 102  
contained in the main portion of the certificate except for the 103  
address of the person to whom the certificate is issued. Except 104  
as provided in this division, whenever a reference is made in 105  
the Revised Code to a motor vehicle certificate of registration 106  
that is issued under this section, the reference shall be deemed 107  
to refer to either the main portion of the certificate or the 108

portion containing all information in the main portion except 109  
the address of the person to whom the certificate is issued. If 110  
a reference is made in the Revised Code to the seizure or 111  
surrender of a motor vehicle certificate of registration that is 112  
issued under this section, the reference shall be deemed to 113  
refer to both the main portion of the certificate and the 114  
portion containing all information in the main portion except 115  
the address of the person to whom the certificate is issued. 116

(C) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor 117  
misdemeanor. 118

Sec. 4503.261. (A)(1) The registrar of motor vehicles 119  
shall use a competitive selection process to select a vendor for 120  
a contract to operate a specialty license plate program. 121

(2) Beginning nine months after the effective date of this 122  
section, the vendor shall design and market specialty license 123  
plates, including specialty license plates required to be issued 124  
by the registrar under this chapter. Under the program, the 125  
registrar remains responsible for the issuance of any specialty 126  
license plate and validation sticker and the collection of taxes 127  
and fees related to a specialty license plate. The contract 128  
shall be for a period not to exceed two years and may be 129  
extended for additional two-year terms. 130

(3) A vendor selected under division (A)(1) of this 131  
section is exempt from section 4503.106 of the Revised Code. 132

(B) Any contract entered into under this section shall 133  
include, at a minimum, all of the following: 134

(1) A requirement that the vendor utilize electronic 135  
infrastructure that is compatible with infrastructure used by 136  
the bureau of motor vehicles; 137

(2) Provisions concerning the security of the information 138  
exchanged through the electronic infrastructure utilized by the 139  
registrar, the vendor, and any other third parties; 140

(3) Provisions allowing an owner or lessee to select the 141  
combination of letters and numbers appearing on a license plate 142  
in accordance with section 4503.40 or 4503.42 of the Revised 143  
Code, subject to approval by the registrar; 144

(4) Subject to division (C) of this section, provisions 145  
allowing an owner or lessee purchasing a specialty license plate 146  
created by the vendor to select various design features of the 147  
license plate; 148

(5) Subject to division (C) of this section, provisions 149  
allowing the vendor to enter into an agreement with any person 150  
for the marketing and sale of a specialty license plate that is 151  
not offered by the registrar under this chapter. A person or 152  
entity that has sponsored a specialty license plate offered by 153  
the registrar under this chapter may create a new specialty 154  
license plate through the private vendor. 155

(6) Provisions specifying that the vendor shall comply 156  
with all applicable copyright and trademark laws; 157

(7) A requirement that the registrar collect the following 158  
fees and contribution related to the issuance of license plates 159  
under the program that are in addition to any applicable motor 160  
vehicle registration taxes and fees levied under Chapters 4503. 161  
and 4504. of the Revised Code: 162

(a) A fee to compensate the registrar for costs associated 163  
with program administration and license plate production and 164  
design. Fees collected under division (B) (7) (a) of this section 165  
shall be deposited in the public safety-highway purposes fund 166

<u>created in section 4501.06 of the Revised Code.</u>	167
<u>(b) A fee to compensate the vendor for the performance of</u>	168
<u>its duties under the contract. Fees collected under division (B)</u>	169
<u>(7)(b) of this section shall be deposited in the public safety</u>	170
<u>license plate contract fund created in section 4503.262 of the</u>	171
<u>Revised Code.</u>	172
<u>(c) A contribution for deposit in the drug law enforcement</u>	173
<u>fund created in section 5502.68 of the Revised Code.</u>	174
<u>(8) Provisions requiring the vendor to comply with all</u>	175
<u>applicable requirements of the Revised Code and the Ohio</u>	176
<u>Administrative Code.</u>	177
<u>(C)(1) The registrar shall submit each specialty license</u>	178
<u>plate design created under the specialty license plate program</u>	179
<u>established under this section to the joint committee on agency</u>	180
<u>rule review. The committee has final authority regarding the</u>	181
<u>design and content of any specialty license plate created under</u>	182
<u>the program and shall approve or disapprove of any proposed</u>	183
<u>specialty license plate. A quorum of the committee, as specified</u>	184
<u>in section 101.35 of the Revised Code, is necessary for such</u>	185
<u>approval or disapproval.</u>	186
<u>(2) Before the registrar submits a specialty license plate</u>	187
<u>to the joint committee on agency rule review for approval, the</u>	188
<u>registrar may consult with the superintendent of the state</u>	189
<u>highway patrol concerning any specialty license plate regarding</u>	190
<u>readability, reflectivity, and public safety.</u>	191
<u>(3) The registrar shall not restrict the background color,</u>	192
<u>color combinations, or color of alphanumeric license plate</u>	193
<u>numbers of a specialty license plate proposed by the private</u>	194
<u>vendor except for purposes of public safety.</u>	195

(D) (1) If a contract with a vendor is entered into under 196  
this section, the owner or lessee of any passenger car, 197  
noncommercial motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, or other 198  
vehicle of a class approved by the registrar and the vendor may 199  
apply for registration of the vehicle and issuance by the 200  
registrar of a specialty license plate pursuant to this section. 201

(2) A specialty license plate available through the 202  
program and a validation sticker, or validation sticker alone, 203  
shall be issued by the registrar in coordination with the vendor 204  
to the owner or lessee upon receipt of a completed application 205  
under this section; payment of the regular license tax as 206  
prescribed under section 4503.04 of the Revised Code, any 207  
applicable motor vehicle tax levied under Chapter 4504. of the 208  
Revised Code, any applicable additional fee prescribed under 209  
section 4503.40 or 4503.42 of the Revised Code, any additional 210  
fees required by the vendor; and compliance with all other 211  
applicable laws relating to the registration of motor vehicles. 212

(E) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the 213  
contrary, the registrar may execute all duties required by this 214  
section and take all necessary actions to implement its 215  
requirements. 216

**Sec. 4503.262.** The public safety license plate contract 217  
fund is created in the state treasury. The fund shall consist of 218  
fees collected by the registrar pursuant to division (B) (7) (b) 219  
of section 4503.261 of the Revised Code. The registrar shall use 220  
the money in the fund to compensate the private vendor selected 221  
under section 4503.261 of the Revised Code for the performance 222  
of its duties under the contract authorized under that section. 223

**Sec. 5502.68.** (A) There is hereby created in the state 224  
treasury the drug law enforcement fund. The fund consists of the 225



<u>following:</u>	226
<u>(1) Ninety-seven per cent of three dollars and fifty cents</u>	227
out of each ten-dollar court cost imposed pursuant to section	228
2949.094 of the Revised Code <del>shall be credited to the fund.</del> ;	229
<u>(2) Contributions required to be deposited in the fund</u>	230
<u>under section 4503.261 of the Revised Code.</u>	231
Money in the fund shall be used only in accordance with	232
this section to award grants to counties, municipal	233
corporations, townships, township police districts, and joint	234
police districts to defray the expenses that a drug task force	235
organized in the county, or in the county in which the municipal	236
corporation, township, or district is located, incurs in	237
performing its functions related to the enforcement of the	238
state's drug laws and other state laws related to illegal drug	239
activity.	240
The division of criminal justice services shall administer	241
all money deposited into the drug law enforcement fund and, by	242
rule adopted under Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, shall	243
establish procedures for a county, municipal corporation,	244
township, township police district, or joint police district to	245
apply for money from the fund to defray the expenses that a drug	246
task force organized in the county, or in the county in which	247
the municipal corporation, township, or district is located,	248
incurs in performing its functions related to the enforcement of	249
the state's drug laws and other state laws related to illegal	250
drug activity, procedures and criteria for determining	251
eligibility of applicants to be provided money from the fund,	252
and procedures and criteria for determining the amount of money	253
to be provided out of the fund to eligible applicants.	254

(B) The procedures and criteria established under division	255
(A) of this section for applying for money from the fund shall	256
include, but shall not be limited to, a provision requiring a	257
county, municipal corporation, township, township police	258
district, or joint police district that applies for money from	259
the fund to specify in its application the amount of money	260
desired from the fund, provided that the cumulative amount	261
requested in all applications submitted for any single drug task	262
force may not exceed more than two hundred fifty thousand	263
dollars in any calendar year for that task force.	264
(C) The procedures and criteria established under division	265
(A) of this section for determining eligibility of applicants to	266
be provided money from the fund and for determining the amount	267
of money to be provided out of the fund to eligible applicants	268
shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:	269
(1) Provisions requiring that, in order to be eligible to	270
be provided money from the fund, a drug task force that applies	271
for money from the fund must provide evidence that the drug task	272
force will receive a local funding match of at least twenty-five	273
per cent of the task force's projected operating costs in the	274
period of time covered by the grant;	275
(2) Provisions requiring that money from the fund be	276
allocated and provided to drug task forces that apply for money	277
from the fund in accordance with the following priorities:	278
(a) Drug task forces that apply, that are in existence on	279
the date of the application, and that are determined to be	280
eligible applicants, and to which either of the following	281
applies shall be given first priority to be provided money from	282
the fund:	283

(i) Drug task forces that received funding through the	284
division of criminal justice services in calendar year 2007;	285
(ii) Drug task forces in a county that has a population	286
that exceeds seven hundred fifty thousand.	287
(b) If any moneys remain in the fund after all drug task	288
forces that apply, that are in existence on the date of the	289
application, that are determined to be eligible applicants, and	290
that satisfy the criteria set forth in division (C) (2) (a) (i) or	291
(ii) of this section are provided money from the fund as	292
described in division (C) (2) (a) of this section, the following	293
categories of drug task forces that apply and that are	294
determined to be eligible applicants shall be given priority to	295
be provided money from the fund in the order in which they apply	296
for money from the fund:	297
(i) Drug task forces that are not in existence on the date	298
of the application;	299
(ii) Drug task forces that are in existence on the date of	300
the application but that do not satisfy the criteria set forth	301
in division (C) (2) (a) (i) or (ii) of this section.	302
(D) The procedures and criteria established under division	303
(A) of this section for determining the amount of money to be	304
provided out of the fund to eligible applicants shall include,	305
but shall not be limited to, a provision specifying that the	306
cumulative amount provided to any single drug task force may not	307
exceed more than two hundred fifty thousand dollars in any	308
calendar year.	309
(E) Any drug task force for which a grant is awarded by	310
the division of criminal justice services under this section	311
shall comply with all grant requirements established by the	312

division, including a requirement that the drug task force 313  
report its activities through the El Paso intelligence center 314  
information technology systems. 315

(F) As used in this section, "drug task force" means a 316  
drug task force organized in any county by the sheriff of the 317  
county, the prosecuting attorney of the county, the chief of 318  
police of the organized police department of any municipal 319  
corporation or township in the county, and the chief of police 320  
of the police force of any township police district or joint 321  
police district in the county to perform functions related to 322  
the enforcement of state drug laws and other state laws related 323  
to illegal drug activity. 324

**Section 2.** That existing sections 4503.038, 4503.19, and 325  
5502.68 of the Revised Code are hereby repealed. 326