



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 293

January Session, 2009

Substitute Senate Bill No. 799

Senate, March 30, 2009

The Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement reported through SEN. HANDLEY of the 4th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING COLLEGIATE LICENSE PLATES, GRADUATE PROGRAMS AT CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE AND REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 14-19a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

3 (a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall adopt regulations in
4 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 to establish (1) standards
5 for the issuance of a special certificate of registration and special
6 number plates to a member of an organization which qualifies for
7 issuance, (2) qualifications of organizations whose members wish to
8 apply for such special registrations, (3) standards for the issuance of
9 number plates containing the logo or emblem of an institution of
10 higher education and the renewal of the registration certificate for a
11 motor vehicle for which such number plate is issued, (4) qualifications
12 of institutions of higher education for which such number plates are

13 requested, (5) procedures for application for such special registration,
14 and ~~[(4)]~~ (6) a fee for such special number plates which shall cover at
15 least the entire cost of making the plates and which shall be in addition
16 to the fee for registration of the motor vehicle. The regulations shall
17 provide that a labor union shall be a qualifying organization.

18 [(b) The Department of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the
19 Board of Governors of the Department of Higher Education, shall
20 adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, to
21 establish standards for the issuance and renewal of collegiate special
22 number plates with the logos or emblems of Connecticut public and
23 independent institutions of higher education to individuals who meet
24 the requirements established by the regulations adopted pursuant to
25 this subsection. The regulations shall: (1) Establish the criteria
26 necessary for a Connecticut institution of higher education to be
27 eligible to have a special number plate issued with the logo or emblem
28 of the institution; (2) provide for the issuance or renewal of such a
29 plate upon the receipt of a form certified by the institution that a
30 contribution of at least fifty dollars was made to a scholarship fund or
31 scholarship account at such an institution prior to each such issuance
32 and renewal. Each such renewal shall occur at the time of each renewal
33 of the motor vehicle's registration; (3) the fee established in subdivision
34 (4) of subsection (a) of this section; (4) any registration fee required by
35 the commissioner pursuant to section 14-12; and (5) any additional
36 information or fees required by the commissioner. All contributions to
37 the scholarship fund or scholarship account of a participating
38 institution of higher education shall be distributed on the basis of
39 financial need.]

40 [(c)] (b) On or after July 1, 2004, the commissioner may issue special
41 certificates of registration and special number plates in accordance
42 with the regulations adopted under subsection (a) of this section
43 provided [he] the commissioner may not issue a set of special number
44 plates bearing the same numerals as any other plate issued by the
45 department. The commissioner may discontinue the issuance of any
46 such special number plates issued for a qualified organization, or

47 special plates issued in accordance with the provisions of sections 14-
48 21f to 14-21p, inclusive, and section 2 of this act, at any time, upon
49 written notice to the organization if, in the opinion of the
50 commissioner, the demand for such plates is insufficient to support the
51 costs of production.

52 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) (a) (1) On or after January 1,
53 2010, upon the demonstration by an institution of higher education in
54 this state that there is a demand for at least four hundred collegiate
55 commemorative number plates, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles
56 may issue a collegiate commemorative number plate with a design
57 containing the logo or emblem of such institution of higher education
58 as determined by such institution of higher education.

59 (2) Any regulation of the Department of Motor Vehicles that (A) is
60 in force on January 1, 2010, and (B) allows the Commissioner of Motor
61 Vehicles to issue collegiate special number plates with the logo or
62 emblem of an institution of higher education shall continue in force
63 and effect as a regulation with respect to any such special number
64 plate issued prior to January 1, 2010.

65 (3) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles may adopt regulations, in
66 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to
67 establish standards for the issuance and renewal of collegiate number
68 plates with a design containing the logo or emblem of such institution
69 of higher education when an institution of higher education is unable
70 to demonstrate that there is a demand for at least four hundred such
71 collegiate number plates.

72 (b) If the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles establishes a collegiate
73 commemorative number plate for an institution of higher education
74 pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, the
75 commissioner shall provide for a one-time fee of fifty-five dollars to be
76 charged for collegiate commemorative number plates in addition to
77 the regular fee or fees prescribed for the registration of a motor vehicle.
78 Fifteen dollars of such one-time fee shall be allocated to the
79 Department of Motor Vehicles to be used for the administrative costs

80 of carrying out the provisions of this section. Such number plates shall
81 have letters and numbers selected by the commissioner. The
82 commissioner may establish a higher fee for: (1) Such number plates
83 that contain any combination of letters or numbers requested by the
84 registrant as authorized by section 14-49 of the general statutes, in
85 addition to the fee or fees prescribed for plates issued under said
86 section; and (2) such number plates that are low number plates, in
87 accordance with section 14-160 of the general statutes, in addition to
88 the fee or fees prescribed for plates issued under said section 14-160.

89 (c) The biennial renewal fee for the registration certificate of a motor
90 vehicle for which a collegiate commemorative number plate has been
91 issued pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section shall
92 include, in each renewal year subsequent to the year of issuance, a
93 collegiate commemorative number plate fee in the amount of fifty-five
94 dollars, of which five dollars shall be allocated for administrative costs
95 to the Department of Motor Vehicles, which shall be in addition to the
96 fee for the renewal of registration certificate. No additional renewal fee
97 shall be charged for renewal of registration for any motor vehicle
98 bearing collegiate commemorative number plates that contain letters in
99 place of numbers, or low number plates, in excess of the renewal fee
100 for collegiate commemorative number plates with letters and numbers
101 selected by the commissioner. No additional fee shall be charged for
102 the transfer of an existing registration to or from a registration with a
103 collegiate commemorative number plate.

104 (d) If the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles establishes a collegiate
105 commemorative number plate for an institution of higher education
106 pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, the
107 commissioner shall establish an account for such institution pursuant
108 to subsection (e) of this section and shall deposit into such account all
109 fees, other than those moneys designated for administrative costs of
110 the Department of Motor Vehicles, that are established and collected
111 pursuant to this section for the issuance of such commemorative
112 number plate or renewal of the registration certificate of a motor
113 vehicle for which such commemorative number plate has been issued.

114 (e) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall establish an account
115 for each institution of higher education for which the commissioner
116 has established a commemorative number plate pursuant to
117 subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section. Each such account shall
118 be a separate, nonlapsing account within the General Fund. Such
119 account shall contain any moneys required to be deposited in the
120 account pursuant to this section. The moneys in each such account
121 shall be distributed quarterly by the commissioner to the institution of
122 higher education for which the account is established. Such institutions
123 of higher education shall expend funds received from such accounts to
124 provide funding for scholarships on the basis of financial need and for
125 alumni outreach efforts.

126 Sec. 3. Subsection (c) of section 10a-143 of the general statutes is
127 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*
128 *October 1, 2009*):

129 (c) There shall continue to be a Board for State Academic Awards
130 which shall be an independent constituent unit of the state system of
131 higher education with authority to grant undergraduate and graduate
132 credits and degrees on the basis of (1) examinations, (2) courses offered
133 by Charter Oak State College, and (3) other forms of evaluation and
134 validation of learning, including transfer of credit. Said board is
135 authorized to use the term "Charter Oak State College" on diplomas
136 and other documents and utterances to affirm the status of the board
137 as a degree-granting institution of higher education. It shall be the
138 responsibility of the board to serve the interest of all Connecticut
139 residents by providing open access to academic credentials which are
140 based on a consensus of professional judgment. The purpose of such
141 credentials shall be to identify and give recognition to higher learning
142 acquired by individuals through independent study, work experience
143 and programs of noncollegiate educational activity.

144 Sec. 4. Subsection (e) of section 10a-143 of the general statutes is
145 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
146 *1, 2009*):

147 (e) (1) The Board for State Academic Awards shall develop and
148 implement programs to improve opportunities in higher education
149 through alternative modes of service, including, but not limited to,
150 guidance and information services, registration and validation
151 services, examination and degree-granting services, technological
152 delivery systems, and projects of research and development. With
153 respect to its own operation the board may appoint and remove an
154 executive director, who shall be the chief academic and administrative
155 officer, and a professional academic staff. The board may determine
156 the size of the academic staff and the duties, terms, and conditions of
157 employment of said director and staff subject to personnel guidelines
158 established by the Board of Governors of Higher Education in
159 consultation with the Board for State Academic Awards. The board
160 shall establish through appointments on an adjunct basis a faculty of
161 consulting examiners to make recommendations as to requirements
162 and standards of the board's programs and to make recommendations
163 for the award of academic undergraduate and graduate credits and
164 degrees. Persons serving as members of the faculty of consulting
165 examiners shall have appropriate professional qualifications as
166 determined by the board and may hold professional appointments in
167 active status at accredited institutions of postsecondary or higher
168 learning. Within the limit of appropriations, the board shall fix the
169 compensation of persons serving with adjunct appointment as
170 members of the faculty of consulting examiners. The board shall confer
171 such undergraduate and graduate certificates and degrees as are
172 appropriate to programs of postsecondary and higher learning and in
173 accordance with the recommendations of the board's faculty of
174 consulting examiners on the basis of (A) examinations, (B) courses
175 offered by Charter Oak State College, and (C) other forms of validation
176 and evaluation of learning, including transfer of credit. The board shall
177 assist public institutions of higher education in establishing and
178 implementing procedures to award college credits pursuant to
179 subsection (a) of this section.

180 (2) The Board for State Academic Awards shall develop a mission
181 statement which shall include, but not be limited to, the following

182 elements: (A) The educational needs of, and constituencies served by
 183 the board; (B) the degrees offered by the board; and (C) the role and
 184 scope of the programs offered by the board. The board shall submit the
 185 mission statement to the Board of Governors of Higher Education for
 186 review and approval in accordance with the provisions of section 10a-
 187 6.

188 Sec. 5. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1, 2010, the
 189 Commissioner of Higher Education shall prepare a report on issues
 190 concerning remediation programs in institutions of higher education
 191 and shall submit such report to the joint standing committee of the
 192 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher
 193 education in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the
 194 general statutes.

195 Sec. 6. (*Effective from passage*) The Commissioner of Higher
 196 Education shall study issues concerning racial and ethnic disparities
 197 among students at institutions of higher education in this state. Not
 198 later than January 1, 2010, the Commissioner of Higher Education shall
 199 report on such study to the joint standing committee of the General
 200 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education in
 201 accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	14-19a
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	10a-143(c)
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2009</i>	10a-143(e)
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	New section

HED *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 10 \$	FY 11 \$
Department of Motor Vehicles	TF - Cost	50,000	50,000
Comptroller Misc. Accounts (Fringe Benefits) ¹	TF - Cost	12,715	12,715
Department of Motor Vehicles	TF - Revenue Loss	Indeterminate	Indeterminate
Higher Education Constituent Units	GF - See Below	See Below	See Below

Note: TF=Transportation Fund; GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The Department of Motor Vehicles will require one additional Motor Vehicle Examiner at a cost of \$50,000 plus fringes to process the collegiate logo license plates.

Exempting collegiate logo license plates from the annual registration renewal fees is expected to result in a revenue loss to the Transportation Fund. Since the number of requests for the collegiate plate is unknown, the revenue loss to the Transportation Fund is indeterminate.

Sections 5 and 6, which require the Department of Higher Education to complete studies on remediation programs in institutions of higher

¹ The fringe benefit costs for state employees are budgeted centrally in the Miscellaneous Accounts administered by the Comptroller on an actual cost basis. The following is provided for estimated costs associated with additional personnel. The estimated non-pension fringe benefit rate as a percentage of payroll is 25.43%. Fringe benefit costs for new positions do not initially include pension costs as the state's pension contribution is based upon the 6/30/08 actuarial valuation for the State Employees Retirement System (SERS) which certifies the contribution for FY 10 and FY 11. Therefore, new positions will not impact the state's pension contribution until FY 12 after the next scheduled certification on 6/30/2010.

education and issues concerning racial and ethnic disparities among students and institutions of higher education, are not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing revenue loss identified above for the Transportation Fund would continue into the future.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 799*****AN ACT CONCERNING COLLEGIATE LICENSE PLATES,
GRADUATE PROGRAMS AT CHARTER OAK STATE COLLEGE
AND REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER
EDUCATION.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill revises the Department of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) collegiate special number plate program. It eliminates the requirement that an individual make a donation to the college's scholarship fund or account prior to obtaining or renewing the plate. The bill instead requires DMV to charge certain fees for the plates, retain a portion to cover its administrative costs, and transfer the remainder to the institutions for need-based scholarships and alumni outreach efforts. The DMV commissioner must (1) establish a separate account for each institution for which he establishes a commemorative plate and (2) distribute the funds on a quarterly basis (see COMMENT).

The bill explicitly authorizes the Board for State Academic Awards to award undergraduate and graduate credits and degrees and allows it to do so though courses offered by Charter Oak State College.

The bill also requires the Department of Higher Education (DHE) commissioner to report on issues concerning (1) remediation programs in higher education institutions and (2) racial and ethnic disparities among students in higher education institutions. The commissioner must submit the reports to the Higher Education Committee by January 1, 2010.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2009, except for the provision concerning the Board for State Academic Awards, which is effective July 1, 2009 and the DHE reporting provisions, which are effective

upon passage.

COLLEGIATE COMMEMORATIVE NUMBER PLATES

The bill aligns the collegiate plate program with the DMV's other special interest plate programs. It authorizes the DMV commissioner to issue, beginning January 1, 2010, collegiate commemorative number plates with a Connecticut college's logo or emblem, as the college determines. It requires the college to demonstrate demand for at least 400 of the plates, which conforms to current DMV regulations concerning collegiate plates. It allows the commissioner to adopt regulations for issuing collegiate plates for colleges unable to demonstrate demand for at least 400 of them.

Regulations

This bill eliminates the requirement that the DMV commissioner adopt regulations to govern the existing collegiate special number plate program and instead requires the commissioner to adopt regulations for collegiate plates as part of the regulations governing special number plates for qualifying institutions. The regulations must include (1) standards for issuing number plates containing a higher education institution's logo or emblem, (2) standards for renewing a vehicle's registration certificate for which it has issued such a plate, and (3) qualifications for higher education institutions requesting the plates.

In eliminating the regulations, the bill eliminates the requirement that the regulations require an individual applying for or renewing a collegiate plate to provide a form certified by the college that he or she has contributed at least \$50 to the college's scholarship fund or account.

The bill requires that any DMV regulations in force on January 1, 2010 that allow the commissioner to issue collegiate special number plates remain in force and effect for such plates issued before January 1, 2010.

As with the existing special number plate program, the bill allows

the commissioner to discontinue the collegiate plate program at any time if he determines that demand for the plates is insufficient to support production costs and he notifies the qualified organization in writing of his intent.

Collegiate Plate Fee

The bill requires a one-time \$55 fee for the collegiate plates in addition to any normally required registration fees. It requires DMV to retain \$15 of the fee for administrative costs associated with the plate program. The commissioner selects the plates' numbers and letters. And DMV may collect additional fees, as it does by law, for (1) plates containing a requested combination of letters or numbers ("vanity" plates) and (2) low-number plates designated by statute.

Biennial Renewal Fee

The bill adds a \$55 collegiate commemorative number plate fee to the biennial registration renewal fee for a vehicle issued a collegiate plate. The fee applies for each renewal year following the year the plate was issued. DMV retains \$5 of the \$55 fee for administrative costs. The bill prohibits any additional fee for (1) vanity plates or (2) low-number plates. It also prohibits any additional fee for transferring an existing registration to or from a collegiate plate registration.

Collegiate Plate Accounts

The bill requires the commissioner to establish a separate, nonlapsing account in the General Fund for each college for which he establishes a collegiate plate for (see COMMENT). Except for fees designated for DMV's administrative costs, the commissioner must deposit into the account all fees established and collected for the college's plate. The bill requires that (1) the account contain any money the bill requires and (2) the commissioner distribute the funds quarterly to each respective college. Colleges must use the funds (1) to provide need-based scholarships and (2) for alumni outreach efforts. Current law requires that the contributions individuals make directly to the institutions prior to applying for or renewing a collegiate plate be distributed as need-based scholarships.

BOARD FOR STATE ACADEMIC AWARDS

Under current law, the Board for State Academic Awards can (1) award credits and degrees based on examinations and other types of learning evaluation and validation, including credit transfers, and (2) appoint adjunct faculty as consulting examiners to make recommendations on requirements and standards for the board's programs, credits, and degrees.

The bill authorizes the board to award undergraduate and graduate credits and degrees and allows it to do so though courses offered by Charter Oak State College. It also allows the consulting examiners to make recommendations for awarding undergraduate and graduate credits and degrees.

COMMENT***Commissioner's Requirements Regarding Collegiate Plate Funds***

The bill requires the commissioner to establish the collegiate plate accounts in the General Fund and perform other related functions, including distributing the funds directly to the colleges. By law, the comptroller is authorized to establish and maintain the state's accounts (CGS § 3-112). The DMV commissioner has no authority to do so.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 0 (03/12/2009)