



SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES IN CONNECTICUT

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BEST SELLERS

For FY 2014 (through March 31) the top three revenue producing special interest license plates were:

- Long Island Sound (\$87,025),
- UConn (\$27,000), and
- United We Stand (\$10,920).

QUESTION

This report lists Connecticut's special interest license plates, the number of plates sold in the past three years, and the revenue generated during that time.

SUMMARY

Connecticut's special interest license plates (those formatted differently than standard plates) generally fall into three categories: (1) those created by legislative mandate, with most of the fee revenue designated for a specified purpose (e.g., preserving Long Island Sound); (2) college, university, and organization logo plates, which use the standard format but include a logo or legend; and (3) special status plates (e.g., Prisoner of War plates).

This report does not consider such other non-standard license plates as (1) low number plates (those numbered 1 to 10000), (2) vanity plates, or (3) Early American (antique) plates.

Table 1, below, shows the number of special interest plates sold, and the revenue from their sale for the past three fiscal years, according to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV):

Table 1: Special Interest Plates Sales and Revenue, 2012 - March 31, 2014

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Total Special Plates Sold</i>	<i>Revenue</i>
2012	6,511	\$203,128
2013	6,612	\$197,326
2014 (through March 31)	7,441	\$263,729

More information on the types, and specific examples, of state special interest license plates can be found on DMV's website at:

<http://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=811&q=276580>.

SPECIAL INTEREST LICENSE PLATES

Special Interest License Plates Specifically Mandated by Statute

The law requires DMV to create 12 specific special interest license plates and directs most of the revenue they generate for specified purposes.

The fee for each of these plates is in addition to the basic vehicle registration fee that each vehicle owner pays. Fifteen dollars of each initial fee and \$5 of each renewal fee (if any) of the special plates cover DMV's costs of producing and issuing the plates.

Table 2, below, lists each type of special interest license plate, the statutes that authorize them and year the legislature enacted them, their initial and renewal fees, and their purpose. (A "remake" is a plate that transfers the owner's current registration to the special plate.)

Table 2: Special Interest License Plates Enumerated in Statute

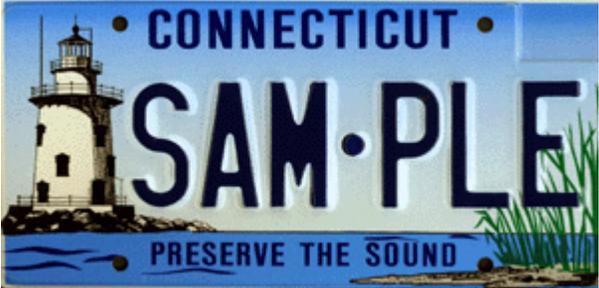
License Plate, Statutory Reference, and Year Enacted	Initial Fee	Renewal Fee	Fund	Purpose or Program
<p>Long Island Sound (CGS §§ 14-21e, 22a-27k, and 22a-27v)</p> <p>1992</p> 	<p>Initial fee: \$50 (off the shelf)</p> <p>\$70 (remake of current plate)</p> <p>\$100 (a number between 100 and 999 preceded or followed by the letters "LIS")</p> <p>\$139 (vanity plate)</p>	<p>None, but DMV may request a \$15 donation on renewal</p>	<p>Restricted</p>	<p>For a variety of purposes related to restoring and rehabilitating Long Island Sound.</p> <p>The \$100 "LIS" plate is issued if \$85 is donated to the Long Island Sound fund (Conn Agency Regs. § 14-21e-5(c)).</p> <p>\$10 of the voluntary \$15 donation at renewal is placed in a habitat restoration subaccount.</p> <p>DMV may request an additional voluntary donation to help preserve coastal lighthouses.</p>
<p>Keep Kids Safe (CGS §§ 14-21f and 21g)</p> <p>1995</p> 	<p>\$50 (off the shelf)</p> <p>\$70 (remake)</p> <p>\$139 (vanity)</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Restricted</p>	<p>For innovative community programs to protect children's safety and to increase public awareness of children's safety issues.</p>

Table 2 (continued)

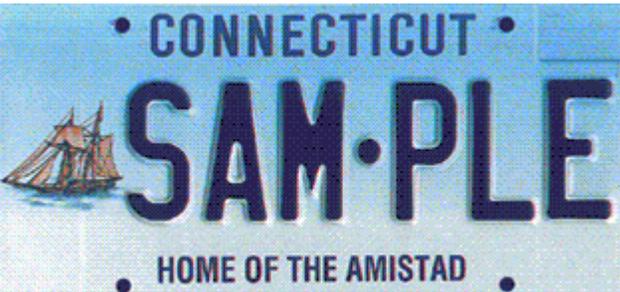
License Plate, Statutory Reference, and Year Enacted	Initial Fee	Renewal Fee	Fund	Purpose or Program
Animal Population Control (CGS § 14-21h) 1997 	\$50 (off the shelf) \$70 (remake) \$139 (vanity)	\$15	Restricted	To increase public awareness of pet overpopulation and state efforts to provide low-cost spaying and neutering of dogs and cats adopted from municipal pounds. \$10 of the renewal fee is placed in the Agriculture Department's animal population control account (Conn. Agency Regs. § 14-21h-6).
Greenways (CGS §§ 14-21i and 22a-27h and 27o) 1997 	\$50 (off the shelf) \$70 (remake) \$139 (vanity)	0	General Fund	To increase public awareness of state and local efforts to preserve, restore, and protect greenways. The legislature eliminated the Greenways account in 2009 (PA 09-3 , § 513, June Special Session). The revenue now goes to the General Fund.
Amistad (CGS §§ 14-21j and 21k) 1998 	\$50 (off the shelf) \$70 (remake) \$139 (vanity)	0	Restricted	To be used by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to increase public awareness of the 1839 uprising against the crew of the Spanish slave ship.

Table 2 (continued)

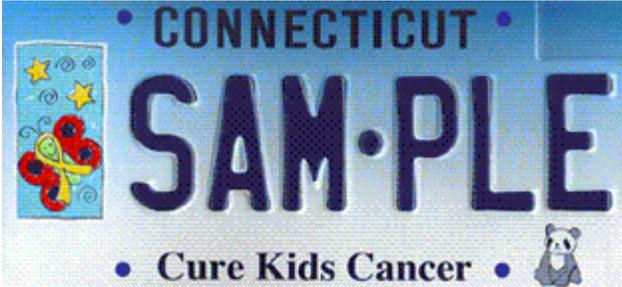
License Plate, Statutory Reference, and Year Enacted	Initial Fee	Renewal Fee	Fund	Purpose or Program
Olympic Spirit (CGS §§ 14-21i and 21m) 1999 	\$70 (off the shelf) \$90 (remake) \$159 (vanity)	None	Restricted	Funds distributed quarterly by OPM to the U.S. Olympic Committee to help support and train athletes and prepare them for competition.
United We Stand (CGS § 14-21o) 2002 	\$50 (off the shelf) \$70 (remake) \$139 (vanity)	None	Restricted	To reimburse college boards of trustees for tuition and fee waivers given certain veterans, children of certain service members, and others; and provide financial support for civil preparedness and supplies and equipment for emergency personnel.
Childhood Cancer Awareness (CGS §§ 14-21g and 21r) 2003 	\$50 (off the shelf) \$70 (remake) \$139 (vanity)	\$15	Restricted	To help fund the pediatric oncology units of Connecticut Children's Medical Center and Yale- New Haven Hospital.

Table 2 (continued)

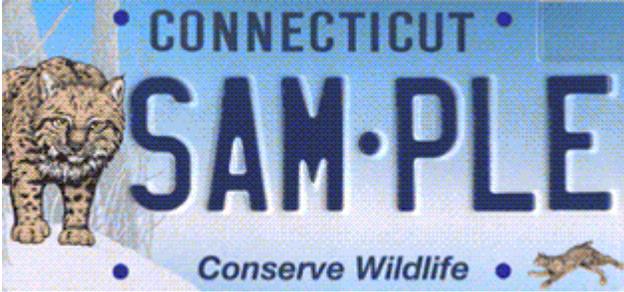
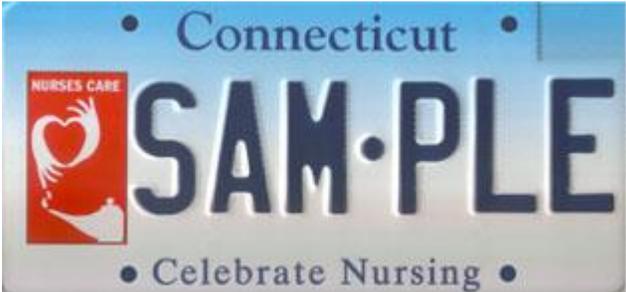
License Plate, Statutory Reference, and Year Enacted	Initial Fee	Renewal Fee	Fund	Purpose or Program
<p>Wildlife Conservation (CGS § 14-21s)</p> <p>(Bald Eagle or Bobcat styles)</p> <p>2003</p> 	<p>\$50 (off the shelf)</p> <p>\$70 (remake)</p> <p>\$139 (vanity)</p>	<p>\$15</p>	<p>General Fund</p>	<p>Initially placed in Department of Environmental Protection Conservation Fund account for wildlife conservation purposes. The legislature eliminated this account in 2009 (PA 09-3, § 513, June Special Session). The revenue now goes to the General Fund.</p>
<p>Support Our Troops! (CGS § 14-21u)</p> <p>2008</p> 	<p>\$60 (off the shelf)</p> <p>\$80 (remake)</p> <p>\$149 (vanity)</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Restricted</p>	<p>To assist the military, their families, and veterans.</p>

Table 2 (continued)

<i>License Plate, Statutory Reference, and Year Enacted</i>	<i>Initial Fee</i>	<i>Renewal Fee</i>	<i>Fund</i>	<i>Purpose or Program</i>
Support for Nursing Profession (CGS § 14-21v) 2008 	\$60 (off the shelf) \$80 (remake) \$149 (vanity)	None	Restricted	To the Connecticut Nurses Foundation to provide scholarships for nursing education and training.
Share the Road (CGS § 14-21w) 2009 Note: The law requires DMV and the Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop this plate in consultation with a bicyclist advocacy organization. According to DMV, this has not occurred.	\$60	None		To be used by DOT to increase public awareness of rights and responsibilities of state bicyclists and motorists on state roads and to promote bicycle safety.

Note: DMV regulations allow the commissioner to auction limited numbers of Long Island Sound and Keep Kids Safe plates with numbers and letters the commissioner selects. The regulations require a minimum bid of \$150, of which \$135 is donated to the respective accounts for these plates. Those bidding higher than the minimum are asked to donate the amount bid above the minimum to the funds each plate supports (Conn. Agency Regs. §§ [14-21e-5](#) and [14-21f-4](#)).

Special License Plates Authorized Under Specific Categories

In addition to the specifically enumerated plates described above, DMV has general authority to issue license plates that bear logos of certain qualifying civic and other organizations and Connecticut colleges and universities. These plates are all the same basic design, except that they bear the organization's or institution's logo or legend. An applicant must apply for these plates through the appropriate alumni or group association and pay a special fee for the initial plate. The law also requires an applicant for a college or university plate to donate at least \$50 to the college's or university's scholarship fund. Some associations and organizations also charge a separate application fee to raise revenue.

Organizational Logo Plates. In 1990, the legislature required DMV to adopt regulations establishing the standards, application procedures, and fees for members of qualifying organizations to get special license plates with an approved organizational logo. These plates are essentially a generic license plate produced with the organization's or association's logo or legend, which DMV must approve (CGS § [14-19a](#)).

Under DMV regulations, an organization qualifies for its own logo plate if it is an association, corporation, group, society, or other organized body of individuals with more or less constant membership, a body of officers, a purpose, and a charter or set of regulations. In addition, the organization must:

1. be nonprofit as demonstrated by its charter or bylaws and an IRS ruling;
2. have as its primary purpose service to the community through a specific program, with a goal of improving public health, education, or the general welfare;
3. (a) have an organization legend that is not obscene, and (b) does not (i) promote a religious belief, (ii) promote a commercial product, brand, or service, or (iii) infringe on a trademark, copyright, or similar proprietary right; and
4. have headquarters or a base of operations in Connecticut, or if a chapter or branch of an international, national, or regional organization, be in good standing and have the parent organization's written permission to use its logo or legend.

Veterans' organizations, towns, municipal corporations, police and firefighter organizations, and similar public service organizations do not have to meet the community program requirement. DMV regulations also allow the commissioner to issue such plates for organizations that (1) are entirely comprised of volunteers and (2) provide significant community service (Conn. Agency Regs. § [14-19a-1 et seq.](#)).

Applicants for these plates pay a \$65 fee for initial issuance of the plate. Members of the Purple Heart Association and the Pearl Harbor Veteran's Association pay only a \$10 initial issuance fee (Conn. Agency Regs. § [14-19a-8](#)).

Some associations charge those applying through the organization for its logo plate a separate fee to raise revenue, a practice DMV does not control.

College and University Logo Plate. The law allows special license plates that bear the logo or emblem of a college or university. The college or university must request the plate and show DMV that the plate will be purchased by at least 400 people. DMV charges \$55 for these plates, \$40 of which it places in an account it has created for each such college or university (CGS § [14-19b](#)). Among the colleges or universities for which DMV has created such plates are Central Connecticut State University, Charter Oak College, Fairfield University, and UConn. To be eligible, a person must also donate at least \$50 to the college's or university's scholarship fund, or the institution must notify the commissioner in writing that the person qualifies (Conn. Agency Regs. § [14-19a-6](#)).

Special License Plates Indicating Special Status

A third category of special plate follows the normal license plate format, but designates the registrant's special status. Such registrants include amateur radio licensees, volunteer fire personnel, former prisoners of war, and Medal of Honor winners. DMV charges a fee to cover the costs of producing some of these plates: others, including Medal of Honor and POW plates, are issued free of charge. These special designations are authorized by specific statutes. We list below the designated license plates, authorizing statute, by year of enactment.

- Amateur radio licensees (CGS § [14-21](#)) 1955
- Prisoners of War and Medal of Honor winners (CGS § [14-21d](#)) 1982
- Volunteer firefighters (CGS § [14-20a](#)) 1987
- Armed forces members and veterans (CGS § [14-20b](#)) 1997
- State and local police officers killed in the line of duty (CGS § [14-21n](#)) 2001
- Immediate family members of a resident killed in action (CGS § [14-20c](#)) 2007

SPECIAL LICENSE PLATE SALES AND REVENUE

Table 3, below, provides the number of special interest license plates issued for the past three fiscal years.

Table 3: Number of Plates Issued By Type, FY 2012 - 2014

<i>Special Interest Plate</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014 (partial year)</i>
Long Island Sound	2,202	2,123	2,039
Greenways	137	128	91
Keep Kids Safe	100	87	83
Amistad	23	28	22
Olympic Spirit	39	39	28
United We Stand	304	303	312
Animal Population Control	351	361	273
Childhood Cancer Awareness	26	35	33
Wildlife Conservation (Bald Eagle)	151	126	153
Wildlife Conservation (Bobcat)	81	79	77
Support Our Troops!	19	19	37
Nurses	21	23	18
UConn	81	38	675

Source: DMV

Table 4, below, shows the revenue collected from the sale of these plates.

Table 4: Revenue from Sale of Special License Plates, FY 2012 - 2014

<i>Special Interest Plate</i>	<i>FY 2012</i>	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014 (partial year)</i>
Long Island Sound	\$92,115	\$88,285	\$87,025
Greenways	\$4,795	\$4,480	\$3,185
Keep Kids Safe	\$5,315	\$4,600	\$4,405
Amistad	\$1,045	\$1,320	\$1,030
Olympic Spirit	\$2,145	\$2,145	\$1,535
United We Stand	\$10,640	\$10,605	\$10,920
Animal Population Control	\$12,294	\$12,635	\$9,555
Childhood Cancer Awareness	\$910	\$1,225	\$1,155
Wildlife Conservation (Bald Eagle)	\$5,285	\$4,410	\$5,355
Wildlife Conservation (Bobcat)	\$2,835	\$2,765	\$2,695
Support Our Troops!	\$855	\$855	\$1,665
Celebrate Nurses	\$945	\$1,035	\$810
UConn	\$3,240	\$1,520	\$27,000

Source: DMV

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We have attached more detailed DMV summaries that provide a (1) breakdown of the number and amount of money for different types of special license plates (i.e., off the shelf, vanity/low number, and replacement plates) and (2) more detailed list of these plates by status (e.g., veteran), organization (e.g., Fidelco Guide Dog), and college or university.

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