



# HOUSE BILL 256: Handicapped Parking/Veterans Plate

2015-2016 General Assembly

<b>Committee:</b>	House Finance	<b>Date:</b>	April 23, 2015
<b>Introduced by:</b>	Reps. Floyd, C. Graham, L. Hall	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Trina Griffin
<b>Analysis of:</b>	PCS to First Edition H256-CSSV-19		Committee Counsel

**SUMMARY:** House Bill 256 would allow a vehicle displaying a partially disabled veteran plate to park in designated handicapped parking spaces.

The Proposed Committee Substitute adds a provision that would allow a person to meet the certification and recertification requirements for a handicapped license plate or placard with a disability determination from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs indicating that the person is handicapped.

**CURRENT LAW:** G.S. 20-37.6 authorizes vehicles to use spaces designated for handicapped persons if the vehicle displays a distinguishing handicapped license plate, a removable windshield placard, or a disabled veteran registration plate.

**Handicapped License Plates & Placards.** – In order to obtain a distinguishing license plate or removable placard, the applicant must provide a certification from a physician, ophthalmologist, or optometrist or of the Division of the Blind that the applicant is handicapped. Distinguishing license plates are renewed annually but do not require further medical certification. Removable placards must be renewed every 5 years and require medical recertification that the person is handicapped. "Handicapped" is defined as follows:

A person with a mobility impairment who, as determined by a licensed physician:

- a. Cannot walk 200 feet without stopping to rest;
- b. Cannot walk without the use of, or assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person, prosthetic device, wheelchair, or other assistive device;
- c. Is restricted by lung disease to such an extent that the person's forced (respiratory) expiratory volume of one second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one liter, or the arterial oxygen tension is less than 60 mm/hg on room air at rest;
- d. Uses portable oxygen;
- e. Has a cardiac condition to the extent that the person's functional limitations are classified in severity as Class III or Class IV according to standards set by the American Heart Association;
- f. Is severely limited in their ability to walk due to an arthritic, neurological, or orthopedic condition; or
- g. Is totally blind or whose vision with glasses is so defective as to prevent the performance of ordinary activity for which eyesight is essential, as certified by a licensed ophthalmologist, optometrist, or the Division of Services for the Blind.

**Disabled and Partially Disabled Veteran Special License Plates.** – The disabled veteran registration plate is issuable to a veteran of the Armed Forces who suffered a 100% service-connected disability. A partially disabled veteran plate is also authorized under current law and is issuable to a veteran of the Armed Forces who suffered a service-connected disability of less than 100%.

**BILL ANALYSIS:** The PCS for House Bill 256 does two things:

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- It would authorize a vehicle displaying a partially disabled veteran plate to park in spaces that are designated for handicapped persons.
- It would allow a person to meet the certification and recertification requirements for a handicapped license plate and removable placard with a disability determination from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that the person is handicapped.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** The act would be effective when it becomes law.

*Wendy Graf Ray, counsel to House Transportation, substantially contributed to this summary.*