



HOUSE BILL 84: Driver's License/Deaf or Hard of Hearing Designation.

2017-2018 General Assembly

Committee:		Date:	August 10, 2017
Introduced by:		Prepared by:	Giles Perry Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	S.L. 2017-191		

OVERVIEW: *S.L. 2017-191 directs the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to develop a voluntary driver's license designation for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, and requires training for law enforcement on the designation and on recognizing and appropriately interacting with persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.*

The act becomes effective January 1, 2018.

CURRENT LAW: Under current law, a drivers license issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles must contain certain information, including the license holder's full name, address, color photograph, physical description, date of birth, and signature, an identifying number assigned by DMV, the class of motor vehicle the license holder is authorized to drive and any endorsements or restrictions that apply, and issuance and expiration dates. In addition, DMV is authorized, upon request of the applicant, to include the license holder's race, including a designation of "AI" for American Indians, and a designation for active duty military and military veterans. *G.S. 20-7.*

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 of S.L. 2017-191:

- Directs DMV to develop, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety, the State Highway Patrol, and the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, a driver's license designation that may be granted to a person who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- Directs DMV, at the request of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, to place a unique symbol, without a further descriptor, on the front of the person's license.
- Directs DMV to record the requested designation in the electronic record associated with the person's driver's license.
- Directs DMV, at the request of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, to enter the driver's license symbol and a descriptor into the electronic record of any motor vehicle registered in that person's name.
- Requires specified documentation be provided to DMV that the person is deaf or hard of hearing.
- Clarifies that this act does not make anyone eligible to obtain a license who is otherwise ineligible under the law, or prohibit anyone from obtaining a license who is otherwise eligible.
- Provides that individuals choosing to register or not to register for a driver's license designation have not waived any rights under the law.

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Director



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- Provides that the information collected can only be available to law enforcement, and only for the purpose of ensuring mutually safe interactions between law enforcement and persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Provides that the right to make the decision for inclusion or removal of the designation from the DMV database is voluntary, and can only be made by the person who holds the driver's license associated with the designation.
- Provides that DMV, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services, shall develop a process for removal of the designation that is available online, by mail, or in person.

Section 2 of the act directs the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission to establish minimum educational and training standards for employment and continuing education for criminal justice officers concerning the designation, and appropriate interaction with persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Section 3 of the act directs the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission to establish minimum educational and training standards for employment and continuing education for officers concerning the designation, and appropriate interaction with persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The act becomes effective January 1, 2018.

Wendy Ray, counsel to the House Transportation Committee, substantially contributed to this bill summary.