



HOUSE BILL 864: Traffic Law Revisions/Collegiate Plates.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Transportation. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	April 30, 2025
Introduced by:	Rep. Pickett	Prepared by:	Wendy Ray
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H864-CSSU-7		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *The Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) for House Bill 864 would make the following changes to traffic laws and laws related to special registration plates:*

- *Amend traffic laws related to slow moving vehicles and minimum speed limits on certain highways.*
- *Authorize issuance of full-color background college insignia plates at the option of the requestor.*

CURRENT LAW: Several provisions of North Carolina law address slower moving vehicles or vehicles traveling at less than the speed limit.

- Vehicles traveling at less than the legal speed limit are required to drive in the right-hand lane of a highway, except when passing or preparing for a left turn (G.S. 20-146(b)).
- When appropriate signs have been posted, it is unlawful for a vehicle to travel in the left lane, next to the median of a dual lane highway, at less than the legal speed limit and impeding the steady flow of traffic, except when preparing for a left turn (G.S. 20-146(e)).
- Vehicles, except for those operating at a reasonable speed for the nature of the vehicle, may not be operated on a highway at such a slow speed as to impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, except when necessary for safe operation or in compliance with law (G.S. 20-141(h)).
- It is unlawful for passenger vehicles to travel on interstates and primary highways at less than the posted minimum speed limits set by statute – less than 40 mph in a 55 mph zone or less than 45 in a 60 mph or greater zone (G.S. 20-141(c)).

A violation of any of these provisions is an infraction.

North Carolina offers a number of special registration plates. Upon application and payment of the required registration fees, a person may obtain from the Division of Motor Vehicles a special registration plate for a motor vehicle registered in that person's name if the person qualifies for the plate. As a general rule, the fee for a special registration plate is the regular vehicle registration fee plus a \$10 special registration plate fee. The cost of some special plates includes a fee in addition to the \$10 special registration plate fee, and the additional fee is transferred quarterly to designated beneficiaries. The issuance of most authorized plates is contingent upon receipt by the Division of at least 300 applications for a standard background plate, or 500 applications for a full-color background plate. In 2014, the General Assembly enacted legislation creating a development process for special registration plates, which requires the organization desiring the plate to submit the required number of paid applications to the

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Division before legislation is introduced to authorize the plate. Before the plate development process was enacted, the General Assembly enacted some special plate authorizations that are category authorizations, such as the collegiate insignia plate authorization, that allow a qualifying requestor to request development of a new plate under the category without a new specific legislative authorization. To develop a collegiate insignia plate, the Division must receive at least 300 applications from a college or university (100 from a public military college or university), and the design must be approved by the Division and the alumni association of the college or university. The plates are authorized on the standard plate background.

BILL ANALYSIS: The PCS for House Bill 864 would amend traffic laws and the law related to special registration plates as follows:

Impeding traffic in left lane of multilane highways. **Section 1** would prohibit vehicles from operating in the left lane of a multilane highway at a speed that impedes the normal and reasonable movement of traffic. **Section 3** would prohibit vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 pounds or more from operating in the leftmost lane of any controlled-access highway with six or more lanes. A violation of either provision would be an infraction.

Amend minimum speed limits. **Section 2** would amend the statutory minimum speed limits on interstate and primary highways. It would increase the minimum speed limit from 40 mph to 45 mph in a 55 mph zone and from 45 mph to 50 mph in a 60 mph zone. It would also add minimum speed limits of 55 mph in a 65 mph zone and 60 mph in a 70 mph zone. It would be unlawful to operate a passenger vehicle under those minimum speed limits when appropriate signs are posted, and violation would be an infraction.

Collegiate insignia special registration plates. **Section 4** would authorize collegiate insignia special registration plates to be issued on either a full-color background or a standard background, at the option of the requestor. The requestor would have to submit 300 paid applications for a standard background plate or 500 paid applications for a full-color background plate before the plate would be issued. A college or university with a plate currently in production on a standard background would be able to apply to the Division to convert to a full-color background plate. Vehicle owners who have been issued standard background plates before a conversion would be able to keep and renew the standard background plate or request the new full-color background plate at the next renewal.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Provisions amending traffic laws would become effective December 1, 2025, and would apply to offenses committed on or after that date. Provisions related to collegiate special plates would become effective October 1, 2025. The remainder of the act would be effective when it becomes law.