

By: Representative Fredericks

To: Ways and Means

HOUSE BILL NO. 283

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 27-19-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO PROVIDE THAT IT SHALL NOT BE UNLAWFUL FOR THE COUNTY NAME ON A
3 MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE PLATE TO BE PARTIALLY OR COMPLETELY
4 OBSTRUCTED FROM VIEW BY ANY OBJECT, DECAL, STICKER OR LICENSE
5 PLATE BRACKET OR HOLDER; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

7 SECTION 1. Section 27-19-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 27-19-31. (1) The State Tax Commission is authorized and
10 directed to establish and maintain a vehicle registration renewal
11 system whereby the license tag attached upon a motor vehicle or
12 trailer may be issued for five (5) years with the approval of the
13 License Tag Commission, except for motor vehicles registered in
14 excess of ten thousand (10,000) pounds gross vehicle weight, and
15 motor vehicles in a fleet registered under Section 27-19-66,
16 apportioned vehicles, rental and commercial trailers and buses,
17 which shall be issued for a period of time determined by the State
18 Tax Commission. During each intervening year of the period for
19 which license tags are issued, the State Tax Commission shall
20 issue up to two (2) license decals, in lieu of the license tags,
21 which will specify the month and year in which the license tag
22 shall expire. Motor vehicles in a corporate fleet registered
23 under Section 27-19-66 shall not be issued decals specifying the
24 month and year of expiration.

25 Any series of tags may be cancelled by the commissioner with
26 the approval of the License Tag Commission and a new series of
27 tags issued.



28 (2) The license decals issued in lieu of the license tags
29 shall indicate the month and the last two (2) figures of the year
30 for which such license shall expire, and these decals shall be
31 color coded so that it shall be possible to distinguish the year
32 and the month for which such decals shall expire. The license
33 decals shall be attached to the license tag of the motor vehicle
34 or trailer, and when so attached shall be deemed to be the license
35 tag for the ensuing registration year. The month decal shall be
36 attached in an upright position in the lower left corner of the
37 license tag, and the year decal shall be attached in an upright
38 position in the lower right corner of the license tag. Decals
39 specifying the month and year of expiration shall not be required
40 to be attached to license tags on motor vehicles in a corporate
41 fleet registered under Section 27-19-66.

42 Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, the
43 registration year shall be a period of one (1) year commencing on
44 the first day of the month following the month in which the
45 vehicle was acquired. Beginning October 1, 1982, original
46 registrations of motor vehicles, except motor vehicles registered
47 in excess of ten thousand (10,000) pounds gross vehicle weight,
48 apportioned vehicles and buses, may be made and shall be prorated
49 for a period of from six (6) to eleven (11) months according to
50 regulations established by the State Tax Commission to reduce a
51 disproportionate number of registrations for a particular month.
52 Beginning July 1, 1995, original registrations and renewal
53 registrations of motor vehicles in corporate fleets registered
54 under Section 27-19-66, shall be prorated according to regulations
55 established by the State Tax Commission so as to cause the
56 registration of such fleet motor vehicles to coincide with the
57 anniversary month for corporate fleets established by the Chairman
58 of the State Tax Commission. Where a vehicle is registered for a
59 period less than twelve (12) months, the anniversary month shall
60 be the month of the expiration of the original license tag.



61 Beginning July 1, 1996, original registrations and renewal
62 registrations of motor vehicles in individual fleets registered
63 under Section 27-19-66 shall be prorated according to regulations
64 established by the State Tax Commission so as to cause the
65 registration of such fleet motor vehicles to coincide with the
66 anniversary month for individual fleets established by the county
67 tax collector. Where a vehicle is registered for a period less
68 than twelve (12) months, the anniversary month shall be the month
69 of the expiration of the original license tag.

70 The commissioner, with the approval of the License Tag
71 Commission, shall so specify the area or areas on the license tag
72 where the license decals shall be attached. The number of the
73 license tag shall be written across its face, and the number of
74 the tag shall represent the registration number; and upon all the
75 tags for private passenger vehicles the word "MISSISSIPPI" shall
76 be written across the top of the tag in capital letters
77 sufficiently large to be easily read, but upon all other tags such
78 word may be abbreviated. The number of the license tag shall not
79 exceed six (6) letters, numbers or a combination of such letters
80 and numbers. Also, on all tags sold and issued, an appropriate
81 place will be provided thereon to place license decals indicating
82 the expiration date of the tag. For the purposes of this section
83 and Section 27-19-32, the term "decal," "decals" or "license
84 decal" shall mean a tab, sticker or other similar device attached
85 to a license tag which validates same for a stated period of time.
86 One (1) license tag and up to two (2) license decals shall be
87 furnished for all vehicles and shall be fastened immovably twelve
88 (12) inches or more above the ground, at the rear of the vehicle
89 under or over the rear light, with the number in upright position
90 so that it will be plainly visible and legible at all times, and
91 at night at a distance of sixty (60) feet. In the case of
92 tractors or other motor vehicles drawing or pulling trailers,
93 semitrailers or farm implements, the tag shall be fastened upon



94 such vehicle twelve (12) inches or more above the ground, upon the
95 front or back of such vehicle, with the number in an upright
96 position. Such license plate, all characters * * * and any
97 legally affixed decals shall not be defaced, covered or obstructed
98 from view by any object, decal, sticker, paint, marking or license
99 plate bracket or holder. Any person who defaces, covers or
100 obstructs any portion of a license tag with any sticker,
101 decoration, paint, marking, license plate bracket or holder or any
102 other thing or device, in such a manner that the characters, * * *
103 and any legally affixed decals on the tag cannot be read, shall be
104 guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be punished by
105 a fine of not more than Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00). However, it
106 shall not be unlawful for the county name to be partially or
107 completely obstructed from view by any object, decal, sticker or
108 license plate bracket or holder. Unless the license tag with
109 current decals is fastened to the vehicle as herein provided, the
110 said vehicle shall be regarded as operating without a license tag,
111 and the owner or operator shall be liable for the penalties herein
112 provided.

113 In addition to the above requirements, license tags for
114 private passenger vehicles shall have printed thereon the name of
115 the county in which such vehicle is registered.

116 Law enforcement officers of this state shall remove from a
117 motor vehicle or trailer any license tag and/or decals which are
118 so defaced that proper identification cannot be reasonably made.
119 The officer shall issue to the driver of such vehicle a tag permit
120 which shall be valid for a period of five (5) days. Each person
121 receiving such tag permit shall purchase, within five (5) days
122 from the date of the issuance of the permit, a new tag and/or
123 decals for the fee set forth in Section 27-19-37 for a substitute
124 tag.

125 Any person who has a license tag or decals on a vehicle which
126 may be so defaced that proper identification cannot be reasonably



127 made may remove such and purchase another license tag and/or
128 decals for the same fee required for a substitute tag. If any
129 license tag shall deteriorate due to age so that identification
130 cannot be reasonably made, the owner may surrender such tag to the
131 issuing authority and be issued a new tag and like decals at no
132 cost.

133 (3) The State Tax Commission is authorized to promulgate
134 appropriate rules and regulations to govern the use and display of
135 license decals and to publish a summary thereof which shall be
136 available to state officials and the public upon request.

137 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
138 and after July 1, 2001.

