MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION 2002

By: Senator(s) White (29th), Gollott, Little, Browning, Smith, Nunnelee, Burton, Furniss, Harvey, Hyde-Smith, Johnson (19th), Ross, Robertson, White (5th), Chamberlin, Lee, Michel, Carmichael, Farris, Dickerson, Scoper, Kirby, Thames, Canon, Posey, Chaney, King, Stogner, Hewes, Hamilton

To: Finance

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
SENATE BILL NO. 2026

AN ACT TO CREATE A SPECIAL "CHOOSE LIFE" MOTOR VEHICLE LICENSE TAG; TO PROVIDE THAT A PORTION OF THE FEE CHARGED FOR SUCH TAG SHALL BE DISBURSED TO THE CHOOSE LIFE ADVISORY COMMITTEE; TO PRESCRIBE THE MANNER IN WHICH FUNDS DERIVED FROM SUCH FEE MAY BE SPENT BY THE CHOOSE LIFE ADVISORY COMMITTEE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) Any owner of a motor vehicle who is a resident of this state, upon payment of the road and bridge privilege taxes, ad valorem taxes and registration fees as prescribed by law for private carriers of passengers, pickup trucks and other noncommercial motor vehicles, and upon payment of an additional fee in the amount provided in subsection (4) of this section, shall be issued a distinctive license tag for each motor vehicle registered in his name, which shall be produced in such color and design as the State Tax Commission, with the advice of the Choose Life Advisory Committee, may prescribe. The words "Choose Life" shall be centered at the bottom of the license tag. The State Tax Commission shall prescribe such letters or numbers, or both, as may be necessary to distinguish each license tag.

(2) Application for the distinctive license tags authorized by this section shall be made to the county tax collector on forms prescribed by the State Tax Commission. The application and the additional fee imposed under subsection (4) of this section, less Two Dollars ($2.00) to be retained by the tax collector, shall be remitted to the State Tax Commission on a monthly basis as prescribed by the commission. The portion of the additional fee retained by the tax collector shall be deposited into the county general fund.
(3) Beginning with any registration year commencing on or after July 1, 2002, any person applying for a distinctive license tag under this section shall pay an additional fee in the amount of Twenty-five Dollars ($25.00) for each distinctive license tag applied for under this section, which shall be in addition to all other taxes and fees. The additional fee paid shall be for a period of time to run concurrent with the vehicle’s established license tag year. The additional fee is due and payable at the time the original application is made for a distinctive license tag under this section and thereafter annually at the time of renewal registration as long as the owner retains the distinctive license tag. If the owner does not wish to retain the distinctive license tag, he must surrender it to the local county tax collector.

(4) The State Tax Commission shall deposit all fees into the State Treasury on the day collected. At the end of each month, the State Tax Commission shall certify the total fees collected under this section to the State Treasurer who shall distribute such collections as follows:

(a) Twenty Dollars ($20.00) of each additional fee collected on distinctive license tags issued pursuant to this section shall be disbursed to the Choose Life Advisory Committee to be used as provided for in subsection (5) of this section.

(b) One Dollar ($1.00) of each additional fee collected on distinctive license tags issued pursuant to this section shall be deposited into the Mississippi Fire Fighter’s Memorial Burn Center Fund created pursuant to Section 7-9-70.

(c) Two Dollars ($2.00) of each additional fee collected on distinctive license tags issued pursuant to this section shall be deposited to the credit of the State Highway Fund to be expended solely for the repair, maintenance, construction or reconstruction of highways.
(5) (a) Funds disbursed to the Choose Life Advisory Committee under this section shall be used by such committee as follows:

   (i) Seventy percent (70%) shall be used to provide for the material needs of pregnant women who are committed to placing their children for adoption, including clothing, housing, medical care, food, utilities and transportation;

   (ii) The remaining funds may only be used for adoption, counseling, training or advertising.

(b) Funds disbursed to the Choose Life Advisory Committee under this section shall not be used for administrative expenses, legal expenses, capital expenditures, attempting to influence any legislation or any political campaign on behalf or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

(6) A regular license tag must be properly displayed as required by law until replaced by a distinctive license tag under this section. The regular license tag must be surrendered to the tax collector upon issuance of the distinctive license tag under this section. The tax collector shall issue up to two (2) month and year license decals for each distinctive license tag issued under this section, which will expire the same month and year as the license tag.

(7) In the case of loss or theft of a distinctive license tag issued under this section, the owner may make application and affidavit for a replacement distinctive license tag as provided by Section 27-19-37. The fee for a replacement distinctive license tag shall be Ten Dollars ($10.00). The tax collector receiving such application and affidavit shall be entitled to retain and deposit into the county general fund five percent (5%) of the fee for such replacement license tag and the remainder shall be distributed in the same manner as funds from the sale of regular distinctive license tags issued under this section.
SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2002.