

By: Representatives Harris, Hall, Keen,  
Mickens, Remak

To: Accountability,  
Efficiency, Transparency

HOUSE BILL NO. 22

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 27-19-56, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO INCLUDE PERSONS WHO HAVE VISION 20/200 OR LESS IN AT LEAST ONE  
3 EYE WITH PROPER CORRECTION WITHIN THE DESCRIPTION OF PERSONS WITH  
4 DISABILITIES WHICH LIMIT OR IMPAIR THE ABILITY TO WALK FOR  
5 PURPOSES OF BEING ELIGIBLE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL MOTOR  
6 VEHICLE LICENSE PLATES OR TAGS, DECALS AND WINDSHIELD PLACARDS FOR  
7 THE DISABLED; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** Section 27-19-56, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
10 amended as follows:

11 27-19-56. (1) (a) Upon application by any legal resident  
12 of the State of Mississippi with a disability which limits or  
13 impairs the ability to walk, or by the owner of a motor vehicle  
14 who has a child, parent or spouse with a disability which limits  
15 or impairs the ability to walk and the child, parent or spouse is  
16 living with the applicant, the Department of Revenue shall prepare  
17 and issue through the county tax collectors a special license  
18 plate bearing the International Symbol of Access adopted by  
19 Rehabilitation International in 1969 at its Eleventh World  
20 Congress on Rehabilitation of the Disabled for not more than two



21 (2) vehicles that are registered in the applicant's name. The  
22 initial application shall be accompanied by the certification of a  
23 licensed physician that (i) the applicant or the applicant's  
24 child, parent or spouse meets the definition of persons with  
25 disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk; and (ii)  
26 that the physician has determined that the applicant or the  
27 applicant's child, parent or spouse will have the disability for  
28 at least five (5) years. The Department of Revenue shall prepare  
29 and issue to the tax collectors of the various counties, decals  
30 for placement on the special license plates. The decals shall  
31 bear thereon the month in which the license plate was issued and  
32 the year in which the special license plate will expire. The  
33 special license plate issued under this section is valid for the  
34 period of time that the license tag attached upon a motor vehicle  
35 is issued pursuant to Section 27-19-31(1). A person to whom the  
36 special license plate is issued may retain the special license  
37 plate and may renew it by submitting to the county tax collector,  
38 on or before its expiration, the certification of a licensed  
39 physician that the physician has determined (i) that the applicant  
40 or the applicant's child, parent or spouse meets the definition of  
41 a person with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to  
42 walk; and (ii) that the applicant or the applicant's child, parent  
43 or spouse will have the disability for at least five (5) years.  
44 If an applicant fails to renew the special license plate before  
45 its date of expiration, then he or she shall surrender the special



46 license plate to the county tax collector and the tax collector  
47 shall issue to such person a regular license plate to replace the  
48 special license plate.

49           (b) Upon application by any legal resident of the State  
50 of Mississippi who has a disabled American veteran plate or tag  
51 issued under Section 27-19-53 properly displayed on his vehicle  
52 and a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk, the  
53 Department of Revenue shall prepare and issue through the county  
54 tax collectors a special decal bearing the International Symbol of  
55 Access adopted by Rehabilitation International in 1969 at its  
56 Eleventh World Congress on Rehabilitation of the Disabled for not  
57 more than two (2) vehicles that are registered in the applicant's  
58 name and properly display the plate or tag issued under Section  
59 27-19-53. The decal shall be affixed to the plate or tag issued  
60 under Section 27-19-53. The initial application shall be  
61 accompanied by the certification of a licensed physician that (i)  
62 the applicant meets the definition of persons with disabilities  
63 which limit or impair the ability to walk; and (ii) that the  
64 physician has determined that the applicant will have the  
65 disability for at least five (5) years. The Department of Revenue  
66 shall prepare and issue to the tax collectors of the various  
67 counties, decals for placement on the plate or tag issued under  
68 Section 27-19-53. The decals shall bear thereon the month in  
69 which the license plate or tag was issued and the year in which  
70 the plate or tag will expire. The special decal is valid for the



71 period of time that the license tag attached upon a motor vehicle  
72 is issued pursuant to Section 27-19-53. A person to whom the  
73 special decal is issued may retain the decal and may renew it by  
74 submitting to the county tax collector, on or before its  
75 expiration, the certification of a licensed physician that the  
76 physician has determined (i) that the applicant meets the  
77 definition of a person with a disability which limits or impairs  
78 the ability to walk; and (ii) that the applicant will have the  
79 disability for at least five (5) years. If an applicant fails to  
80 renew the special license plate decal before its date of  
81 expiration, then he shall surrender the decal to the county tax  
82 collector.

83 (c) Upon application by any legal resident of the State  
84 of Mississippi who has a license tag issued under Section  
85 27-19-56.14 properly displayed on his vehicle and has a disability  
86 which limits or impairs the ability to walk or has a child, parent  
87 or spouse with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to  
88 walk and the child, parent or spouse is living with the applicant,  
89 the Department of Revenue shall prepare and issue through the  
90 county tax collectors a special decal bearing the International  
91 Symbol of Access adopted by Rehabilitation International in 1969  
92 at its Eleventh World Congress on Rehabilitation of the Disabled  
93 for not more than two (2) vehicles that are registered in the  
94 applicant's name and properly display a tag issued under Section  
95 27-19-56.14. The decal shall be affixed to the tag issued under



96 Section 27-19-56.14. The initial application shall be accompanied  
97 by the certification of a licensed physician that (i) the  
98 applicant or the applicant's child, parent or spouse meets the  
99 definition of persons with disabilities which limit or impair the  
100 ability to walk; and (ii) that the physician has determined that  
101 the applicant or the applicant's child, parent or spouse will have  
102 the disability for at least five (5) years. The special decal is  
103 valid for the period of time that the license tag attached upon a  
104 motor vehicle is issued pursuant to Section 27-19-56.14. A person  
105 to whom the special decal is issued may retain the decal and may  
106 renew it by submitting to the county tax collector, on or before  
107 its expiration, the certification of a licensed physician that the  
108 physician has determined (i) that the applicant or the applicant's  
109 child, parent or spouse meets the definition of a person with a  
110 disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk; and (ii)  
111 that the applicant or the applicant's child, parent or spouse will  
112 have the disability for at least five (5) years. If an applicant  
113 fails to renew the special decal before its date of expiration,  
114 then he shall surrender the decal to the county tax collector.

115 (d) (i) The terms "vehicle" and "motor vehicle," as  
116 used in this section, include motorcycles.

117 (ii) The term "persons with disabilities which  
118 limit or impair the ability to walk" when used in this section  
119 means those persons who, as determined by a licensed physician:



1. Cannot walk two hundred (200) feet without  
stopping to rest; or

2. Cannot walk without the use of, or  
assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person, prosthetic  
device, wheelchair, or other assistive device; or

3. Are restricted by lung disease to such an  
extent that the person's forced (respiratory) expiratory volume  
for one (1) second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one  
(1) liter, or the arterial oxygen tension is less than sixty (60)  
mm/hg on room air at rest; or

4. Use portable oxygen; or

5. Have 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; \* \* \*

6. Are severely limited in their ability to  
walk due to an arthritic, neurological or orthopedic condition; or

7. Have vision 20/200 or less in at least one  
(1) eye with proper correction.

For the purposes of certification relating to the condition  
described in item 7 of this subparagraph (ii), an optometrist  
licensed under Section 73-19-1 et seq., shall also be considered  
to be a licensed physician.

(e) An applicant for a special license plate or decal  
bearing the International Symbol of Access shall not be required



to pay any fee or charge for the issuance of such license plate or decal separate from or in addition to the road and bridge privilege taxes, ad valorem taxes and registration fees otherwise required by law to be paid for the issuance of a regular license plate for such vehicle.

(2) The Department of Revenue shall prepare removable windshield placards and such placards shall be issued and periodically renewed upon the applications of persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk, or upon the applications of owners of motor vehicles who have a child, parent or spouse with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk and the child, parent or spouse is living with the owner of the motor vehicle. The placards shall be issued, free of charge, to applicants through the offices of the tax collectors of the counties. The initial application shall be accompanied by the certification of a licensed physician that the applicant or the applicant's child, parent or spouse meets the definition of persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk. These placards shall be valid for the period of time that the license tag attached upon a motor vehicle is issued pursuant to Section 27-19-31(1) and may be renewed in the same manner as provided for the renewal of the special license plates or decals under subsection (1) of this section. The removable windshield placard must be displayed on the left side of the vehicle dashboard or by hanging it on the rearview mirror of the vehicle.



The Department of Revenue shall prescribe the placement for motorcycles.

(3) The Department of Revenue shall provide for the issuance of a temporary removable windshield placard, upon the application of a person with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk, or upon the application of the owner of a motor vehicle who has a child, parent or spouse with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk and the child, parent or spouse is living with the owner of the motor vehicle. Temporary removable windshield placards authorized by this subsection shall be prepared by the Department of Revenue and shall be issued, free of charge, to applicants through the offices of the tax collectors of the counties. Application for a temporary removable windshield placard must be accompanied by the certification of a licensed physician that the applicant or the applicant's child, parent or spouse meets the definition of persons with disabilities which limit or impair the ability to walk. The certification shall also include the period of time that the physician determines the applicant or the applicant's child, parent or spouse will have the disability, not to exceed six (6) months. The temporary removable windshield placard must be displayed on the left side of the vehicle dashboard or by hanging it on the rearview mirror of the vehicle. The temporary removable windshield placard shall be valid for a period of time for which the physician has determined that the applicant will have the disability, not to exceed six (6)





months from the date of issuance. The Department of Revenue shall prescribe the placement for motorcycles.

(4) The removable windshield placard and the temporary removable windshield placard shall be two-sided and shall include:

(a) The International Symbol of Access, which is at least three (3) inches in height, centered on the placard (the color of the removable windshield placard shall be white on a blue shield; and the temporary removable windshield placard shall be white on a red shield);

(b) An identification number and, on the reverse side, the name of the individual to whom the placard is issued;

(c) A date of expiration; and

(d) The seal of the State of Mississippi.

(5) (a) It shall be unlawful to park a motor vehicle in an area set aside for persons who are disabled if the motor vehicle does not (i) have displayed the removable windshield placard authorized in this section with the date of expiration visible, (ii) have the special license plate issued under this section properly displayed upon the motor vehicle, (iii) have the disabled American veteran tag or plate issued under Section 27-19-53 properly displayed upon the motor vehicle, (iv) have the disabled Purple Heart Medal recipient tag or plate issued under Section 27-19-56.5 properly displayed upon the motor vehicle, (v) have the disabled Bronze Star recipient tag or plate issued under Section 27-19-56.62 properly displayed upon the motor vehicle, or (vi)



220 have a license tag issued under Section 27-19-56.14 and bearing  
221 the special decal issued under subsection (1)(c) of this section  
222 properly displayed upon the motor vehicle. Any person who  
223 unlawfully parks a motor vehicle in such areas, or who blocks such  
224 spaces or access thereto, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and,  
225 upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than Two Hundred  
226 Dollars (\$200.00) for each such violation. For the third and  
227 subsequent offenses under this section, the offender's driver's  
228 license shall be suspended for ninety (90) days by the  
229 Commissioner of Public Safety in accordance with Section 63-1-53  
230 in addition to any fine imposed. The court shall not suspend or  
231 reduce any fine required to be imposed under this subsection.

232 (b) A person who is charged with a violation of this  
233 section by parking a motor vehicle in an area set aside for  
234 persons who are disabled and failing properly to display (i) a  
235 removable windshield placard on the dash of the vehicle or by  
236 hanging it on the rearview mirror of the vehicle, (ii) a special  
237 license plate issued under this section upon the vehicle, (iii) a  
238 disabled American veteran tag or plate issued under Section  
239 27-19-53, (iv) have the disabled Purple Heart Medal recipient tag  
240 or plate issued under Section 27-19-56.5 properly displayed upon  
241 the motor vehicle, (v) have the disabled Bronze Star recipient tag  
242 or plate issued under Section 27-19-56.62 properly displayed upon  
243 the motor vehicle, or (vi) a license tag issued under Section  
244 27-19-56.14 and bearing the special decal issued under subsection



(1)(c) of this section properly displayed upon the motor vehicle, shall not be convicted and shall have the charge dismissed upon presentation to the court of proof by means of sworn oral testimony or sworn affidavit that at the time of the charged violation such person or a passenger in the vehicle possessed a valid removable windshield placard issued under this section.

(6) Any person who, for the purpose of obtaining a special license plate or windshield placard under this section, files with the county tax collector a physician's certification, knowing the certification to be false or to have been fraudulently obtained, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be fined not more than Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).

(7) All law enforcement officers are authorized to enforce this section on public and private property. Provision of spaces restricted to handicapped parking and proper marking of such spaces shall be considered as intent and permission to enforce such designated parking on private property. Any owner of private property may tow away a vehicle that is parked on the owner's private property in violation of the disabled parking restrictions set forth in this section at the vehicle owner's expense. In addition, the vehicle owner may be subject to any fines or other penalties provided in this section. Only areas marked in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines or equivalent standards shall be enforced. Spaces shall bear the International Symbol of Access.



(8) Motor vehicles displaying a special license plate, license plate decal, placard or parking certificate or permit bearing the International Symbol of Access issued to a person with a disability by any other state or district subject to the laws of the United States shall be allowed the special parking privileges under this section provided the license plate, decal, placard, permit or certificate bears the International Symbol of Access and is displayed in a prominent place on the vehicle.

(9) Parking in any area set aside for persons who are disabled is limited to vehicles which, immediately before or after the utilization of such an area, are used to transport a person with a disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk. The identification required to park in such an area, except as provided in subsection (8) of this section, is as follows:

(a) For a vehicle used to transport a person with a permanent disability, that person's permanent windshield placard must be displayed or the vehicle must have a special license tag issued under this section or Section 27-19-53 properly displayed or the vehicle must have a license tag issued under Section 27-19-56.14 and bearing the special decal issued under subsection (1)(c) of this section properly displayed.

(b) For a vehicle being used by a person who has a temporary disability which limits or impairs the ability to walk, or which is being used to transport such a person, a temporary windshield placard must be displayed.



295       Any person who parks in an area set aside for persons who are  
296 disabled in violation of this subsection shall be punished as  
297 provided for in subsection (5) of this section.

298       (10) Upon application by a nursing home, retirement home or  
299 other institution that transports disabled persons, the Department  
300 of Revenue may issue the special license plate authorized pursuant  
301 to this section for not more than one (1) vehicle that is  
302 registered in the applicant's name that is used to transport  
303 disabled residents of the institution. Such institution shall  
304 comply with all other laws regarding the registration of such  
305 vehicle.

306       **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
307 and after July 1, 2025.

