

**ACT 64**

H.B. NO. 1861

A Bill for an Act Relating to Number Plates.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:*

SECTION 1. Section 249-9, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

“(a) The number plates hereinabove referred to shall be used upon all vehicles for which a tax has been paid pursuant to sections 249-1 to 249-13. All ~~[such]~~ number plates shall:

- (1) ~~[Bear]~~ If issued before January 1, 2025, bear the word “Hawaii” along the upper portion of the plate and the words “Aloha State” along the lower portion of the plate;

- (2) If issued on or after January 1, 2025, bear the word “Hawai’i” along the upper portion of the plate and the words “Aloha State” along the lower portion of the plate; provided that both “Hawai’i” and “Aloha State” may either contain all uppercase or lowercase letters or have the first letter of each word be uppercase;
- [(2)] (3) Have a distinct contrast between the color of the plate and the numerals and letters thereon; and
- [(3)] (4) Be of [~~such~~] any shape, size, and color, and with [~~such~~] any arrangements of letters and numbers as may, subject to sections 249-1 to 249-13, be determined by the directors of finance of each county through majority consent.

The numerals on all [~~such~~] number plates shall be [~~not~~] no less than three inches in height and the strokes thereof [~~not~~] no less than three-eighths inch in width, except in the case of motorcycles, in which case the numerals shall [~~not~~] be no less than one inch in height and the strokes thereof [~~not~~] no less than one-eighth inch in width.

The director of finance of the city and county of Honolulu shall contract annually on behalf of the counties for the purchase of all number plates, tags, or emblems required. The council of each county shall appropriate and cause to be paid over to the party with whom the director of finance of the city and county of Honolulu shall contract, or to the director of finance of the city and county of Honolulu as the director may direct, [~~such~~] the sum or sums as the director of finance of the city and county of Honolulu shall determine to be the county’s proportionate share of the expense of [~~such~~] the contract and the charges connected therewith. The contract shall be made by the director of finance of the city and county of Honolulu as agent of the several counties, and the proportionate liability of each county shall be stated in the contract. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, the contract shall constitute a valid obligation of each county for its proportionate share.”

SECTION 2. Section 249-9.7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended as follows:

1. By amending its title and subsections (a) and (b) to read:

“~~[[§249-9.7]]~~ **Special number plates for environmental conservation; authorized.** (a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the director of finance shall issue to any registered owner of [~~a motor~~] an electric vehicle, who is a resident of the State and has completed the application and paid the required fees, special number plates that commemorate the importance of environmental conservation, for the registered owner’s motor vehicle. The special number plates shall be granted the same benefits and restrictions granted to any other electric vehicle special number plates.

(b) The director of finance of the city and county of Honolulu shall establish special number plate designs that commemorate the importance of environmental conservation. The design [~~shall~~]:

- (1) [~~Contain~~] Shall contain words or images, or both, that indicate that the special number plate is being issued to commemorate the importance of environmental conservation;
- (2) [~~Be~~] Shall be similar in shape and size to the uniform state number plate prescribed by law; [~~and~~]
- (3) [~~Be~~] Shall be readily identifiable and distinguishable under actual traffic conditions[-]; and
- (4) May, but shall not be required to, bear the words “Aloha State” along the lower portion of the plate.

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The director of finance of the city and county of Honolulu shall consult with the directors of finance of the counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii; the chiefs of police of the city and county of Honolulu and the counties of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii; and the chairperson of the board of land and natural resources in establishing the special number plate design, which shall be visually attractive and highlight Hawaii's environment, native species, or both."

2. By amending subsection (d) to read:

"(d) Each special number plate shall be securely fastened to the ~~[motor]~~ electric vehicle in lieu of the uniform state number plate."

3. By amending subsection (g) to read:

"(g) The director of finance may revoke all special number plates issued pursuant to this section if the total number of registered owners of ~~[motor]~~ electric vehicles that obtain the special number plates is less than one hundred fifty within three years of issuance of the first special number plate."

4. By amending subsection (i) to read:

"(i) For the purposes of this section ~~[-unless a different meaning appears from the context, "special]:~~

"Special number plate" means a license plate that is not a uniform state number plate, unless a different meaning appears from the context.

"Electric vehicle" shall have the same meaning as the term is defined in section 196-2 and produce zero emissions."

SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 21, 2024.)