



Jeff Grim

## *Bill Analysis*

*Legislative Service Commission*

### **Sub. H.B. 293**

127th General Assembly  
(As Passed by the House)

**Reps. Goodwin, J. McGregor, Wachtmann, Yuko, Evans, Reinhard, Latta, Huffman, Peterson, Chandler, Dodd, Seitz, Stebelton, Fende, Sayre, Hughes, Aslanides, Combs, Domenick, Otterman, Bacon, Barrett, Batchelder, Beatty, Bolon, Celeste, Daniels, Dolan, Dyer, Flowers, Gardner, Gibbs, Goyal, J. Hagan, Harwood, Heard, Hite, Hottinger, Letson, Oelslager, Okey, Patton, Schindel, Schlichter, Setzer, Strahorn, Uecker, Wagner, Webster, Widener, Yates, Zehringer**

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#### **BILL SUMMARY**

- Creates "Ohio Agriculture" license plates and requires the contributions paid by persons who obtain the license plates to be deposited into the Ohio Agriculture License Plate Scholarship Fund, which the bill also creates.
- Creates the Ohio Agriculture License Plate Scholarship Program and the Ohio Agriculture License Plate Scholarship Fund Board, and places the Program under the control of the Board.
- Requires the Board to award scholarships from the Fund to students who are enrolled in a program of agricultural education at an Ohio land grant institution.
- Establishes a threshold of 500 annual new and renewal motor vehicle registrations involving a nonstandard educational license plate whose contribution must be used for educational or scholarship purposes in order for the program involving that type of nonstandard educational license plate to continue.

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## CONTENT AND OPERATION

### "Ohio Agriculture" license plates

Under the bill, the owner or lessee of any passenger car, noncommercial motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, or other vehicle of a class approved by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles may apply for issuance of "Ohio Agriculture" license plates. The application for "Ohio Agriculture" license plates may be combined with a request for a special reserved license plate under current law. Upon receipt of the completed application and compliance by the applicant with the bill's requirements, the Registrar is required to issue to the applicant the appropriate vehicle registration and a set of "Ohio Agriculture" license plates with a validation sticker or a validation sticker alone when required by current law.

In addition to the letters and numbers ordinarily inscribed on the license plates, "Ohio Agriculture" license plates are required to be inscribed with words and markings selected and designed by the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation in consultation with representatives of agricultural commodity organizations of this state. The Registrar is required to approve the final design. "Ohio Agriculture" license plates must display county identification stickers that identify the county of registration by name or number. (R.C. 4503.503(A).)

"Ohio Agriculture" license plates and validation stickers are to be issued upon payment of the regular license tax as prescribed in current law; any applicable local motor vehicle license tax; any applicable additional special reserved license plate fee; a Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) \$10 administrative fee; a contribution of \$20; and compliance with all other applicable laws relating to motor vehicle registration (R.C. 4503.503(B) and (C)).

The Registrar must collect the BMV fee and the \$20 contribution for every new and renewal registration application received under the bill. The Registrar is required to transmit the contributions to the Treasurer of State for deposit in the Ohio Agriculture License Plate Scholarship Fund, which the bill creates (see below). (R.C. 4503.503(C).)

The Registrar is required to deposit the \$10 BMV administrative fee, which is to compensate the Bureau for the additional services required in issuing "Ohio Agriculture" license plates, into the existing State Bureau of Motor Vehicles Fund (R.C. 4503.503(D)).

**Modification of the minimum registration requirement generally applicable to special license plates**

Under current law, certain enumerated special license plates and generally all special license plates created since October 21, 1997 (nonstandard license plates) are subject to a minimum registration requirement and to termination and revival procedures. For example, the Registrar is not required to implement any legislation that creates a new license plate until the Registrar receives written statements from at least 1,000 persons indicating that they intend to apply for and obtain the special license plate. (R.C. 4503.78.) If, during any calendar year, the total number of new and renewal motor vehicle registrations involving such a nonstandard license plate totals less than 1,000, the issuance of that license plate may cease as of December 31 of the following year. The Registrar is required to send a written notice to the sponsor of that nonstandard license plate, if a sponsor exists, informing the sponsor of that fact. It must be sent no later than January 15 of the year following the year during which the number of new and renewal motor vehicle registrations involving that nonstandard license plate totaled less than 1,000. The issuance of a nonstandard license plate that is thus ended may be revived if certain conditions are met. (R.C. 4503.77.) Under the bill, "Ohio Agriculture" license plates are subject to these provisions, except that the bill reduces the numerical thresholds in those provisions from 1,000 persons to 500 persons (R.C. 4503.503(E)).

In addition, the bill establishes the same reduced numerical threshold of 500 persons for what the bill describes as a "nonstandard educational license plate." The bill defines this to be a nonstandard license plate that is issued to a motor vehicle registrant upon payment of a contribution that the Registrar deposits into the existing License Plate Contribution Fund (R.C. 4501.21, not in the bill) and that the sponsor of the license plate is required by that section to use for educational or scholarship purposes (R.C. 4503.77(A)(2)). The bill provides that the Registrar cannot send the warning notice to a nonstandard educational license plate sponsor or terminate a program involving a nonstandard educational license plate unless the total number of motor vehicle registrations involving that license plate during calendar year 2007 or any subsequent year is less than 500 (Section 3; R.C. 4503.77(B)(3)).

**Ohio Agriculture License Plate Scholarship Fund**

The bill creates the Ohio Agriculture License Plate Scholarship Fund Board, consisting of the Director of Agriculture or the Director's designee and one representative appointed by each of the following organizations:

- (A) The Ohio Agriculture Council;

(B) The Ohio Corngrowers Association;

(C) The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation;

(D) The Ohio Soy Association;

(E) The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences;

(F) The Ohio Young Farmers Association. (R.C. 901.90(B)(1).)

All original appointments to the Board must be made not later than 90 days after the bill's effective date, and all vacancies are filled in the same manner as the original appointment. Board members serve without compensation, but are reimbursed for the actual expenses they incur in performing their duties. The Director of Agriculture or the Director's designee is the chairperson. The Board is required to adopt rules governing its meetings and proceedings. (R.C. 901.90(B)(2).)

The bill creates the Ohio Agriculture License Plate Scholarship Program to benefit students who attend an institution of higher learning located in this state and are enrolled in a program that is related to agricultural education. The Board is required to adopt rules governing all aspects of the program, including any additional eligibility requirements, the application process, scholarship amounts, and any requirements a student must meet in order to retain a scholarship. All decisions of the Board relating to the scholarship program, including the decision to award, renew, not renew, or revoke a scholarship, are final. (R.C. 901.90(C).)

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## HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	07-31-07
Reported, H. Infrastructure, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs	12-06-07
Passed House (89-0)	01-30-08

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