

HOUSE BILL 1543

By Pinion

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4;
Title 54; Title 55; Title 65 and Title 67, relative to
transportation.

WHEREAS, the sandhill crane is a beautiful migratory bird distributed throughout North America, extending into Cuba and far northeastern Siberia; and

WHEREAS, the crane, striking in appearance, has a forehead and crown covered with reddish skin, averages four and one-half to five feet tall and possesses body plumage varying in shades of gray with a deep rusty brown hue in spring and summer due to preening in iron-rich mud; and

WHEREAS, the sandhill cranes' migratory path takes them throughout eastern Tennessee and, in 2006, more than 15,000 birds graced the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency's Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge marking the largest easy-to-view flock east of the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, 2007 marks the 15th Annual Cherokee Indian Heritage and Sandhill Crane Viewing Days at the Hiwassee Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS, Tennesseans are truly fortunate that the sandhill crane finds eastern Tennessee a warm and hospitable transient home; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-4-202(c)(7), is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subdivision:

(_) Sandhill Crane;

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 55, Chapter 4, Part 2, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

Section 55-4-2__.

(a) Owners or lessees of motor vehicles who are residents of Tennessee, upon complying with state motor vehicle laws relating to registration and licensing of motor vehicles and paying the regular fee applicable to the motor vehicle and the fee provided for in § 55-4-203, shall be issued a sandhill crane new specialty earmarked license plate for a motor vehicle authorized by § 55-4-210(c).

(b) The new specialty earmarked license plates provided for in this section shall contain a likeness of the sandhill crane and shall include the crane's scientific name "Grus canadensis".

(c) In accordance with § 55-4-215, the funds produced from the sale of such new specialty earmarked license plates shall be deposited in the wildlife resources fund established pursuant to § 70-1-401, to be used exclusively for management, protection, propagation and conservation of fish and wildlife species, including the sandhill crane, and the protection and enhancement of such species' habitats.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007, the public welfare requiring it.