# STATE OF NEW YORK

3212

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

# IN ASSEMBLY

January 23, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. SANTABARBARA -- read once and referred to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to the production of and the assessment of a surcharge for distinctive "Feeling Rural Good" license plates; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to establishing the feeling rural good health care fund

**The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:**

Section 1. The vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a new section 404-ff to read as follows:

**§ 404-ff. Issuance of distinctive "Feeling Rural Good" license plates. 1. Any person residing in this state shall, upon request, be issued a distinctive "Feeling Rural Good" license plate of a design approved by the commissioner. Application for said license plate shall be filed with the commissioner in such form and detail as the commissioner shall prescribe.**

**2. A distinctive "Feeling Rural Good" license plate issued pursuant to this section shall be issued in the same manner as other number plates upon the payment of the regular registration fees prescribed by section four hundred one of this article; provided, however, that an additional annual service charge of twenty-five dollars shall be charged for such plate. Such annual service charge shall be deposited pursuant to the provisions of section four hundred four-oo of this article, to the credit of the department of motor vehicles distinctive plate development fund established by section ninety-five-g of the state finance law, and shall be used for the production, design, advertising and marketing of distinctive license plates pursuant to such section ninety-five-g; provided, however, that annual service charges collected in excess of six thousand dollars shall be deposited to the credit of the feeling rural good health care fund established pursuant to section ninety-seven-bbbbb of the state finance law and shall be used in rural regions of**

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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the state to expand school-based health programs, improve access to health research and education, and expand broadband access for improved access to telehealth, enhance access to New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health initiatives in farm (agricultural), fishing and forestry safety, and improve quality of care and services offered by any general hospital as defined in section twenty-eight hundred one of the public health law, any home care services agency established pursuant to article thirty-six of the public health law, any hospice as defined in section four thousand two of the public health law, or any adult care facility as defined in article seven of the social services law including assisted living programs and assisted living residences.

§ 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 97-bbbbb to read as follows:

§ 97-bbbbb. Feeling rural good health care fund. 1. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the commissioner of taxation and finance and the comptroller a special fund to be known as the "feeling rural good health care fund".

2. Such fund shall consist of all revenues received pursuant to the provisions of section four hundred four-ff of the vehicle and traffic law and all other monies appropriated, credited, or transferred thereto from any other fund or source pursuant to law. Nothing contained in this section shall prevent the state from receiving grants, gifts, or bequests for the purposes of the fund, as defined in this section, and depositing them into the fund according to law.

3. On or before the first day of February each year, the comptroller shall certify to the governor, temporary president of the senate, speaker of the assembly, chair of the senate finance committee and chair of the assembly ways and means committee, the amount of money deposited in the feeling rural good health care fund during the preceding calendar year as a result of the revenue derived pursuant to section four hundred four-ff of the vehicle and traffic law.

4. On or before the first day of February each year, the commissioner of health shall provide a written report to the temporary president of the senate, speaker of the assembly, chair of the senate finance committee, chair of the assembly ways and means committee, chair of the senate committee on health, chair of the assembly health committee, the state comptroller and the public. Such report shall include how the monies of the fund were utilized during the preceding calendar year, and shall include:

(a) the amount of money disbursed from the fund and the award process used for such disbursements;

(b) recipients of awards from the fund;

(c) the amount awarded to each;

(d) the purposes for which such awards were granted; and

(e) a summary financial plan for such monies which shall include estimates of all receipts and all disbursements for the current and succeeding fiscal years, along with the actual results from the prior fiscal year.

5. Monies of the fund shall be expended only for rural health care projects approved by the commissioner of health upon the recommendations of the rural health care advisory board established pursuant to this section. As used in this section, the term "rural health care project" means initiatives in rural regions of the state that expand school-based health programs, improve access to health research and education, and expand broadband access for improved access to telehealth, enhance access to New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health initi-

atives in farm (agricultural), fishing and forestry safety, and improve quality of care and services offered by any general hospital as defined in section twenty-eight hundred one of the public health law; any not-for-profit aging services providers including nursing homes as defined in section twenty-eight hundred one of the public health law; any home care services agency established pursuant to article thirty-six of the public health law, any hospice as defined in section four thousand two of the public health law, or any adult care facility as defined in article seven of the social services law including assisted living programs and assisted living residences.

6. The commissioner of health shall appoint a five member rural health care advisory board which shall provide recommendations to such commissioner for the funding of rural health care projects pursuant to this section; provided, however, at least one member of the rural health care advisory board shall be an individual recommended by a general hospital, as defined in section twenty-eight hundred one of the public health law, which, directly or through an affiliate, operates at least one school-based health program in a rural region of the state.

7. Monies shall be payable from the fund on the audit and warrant of the comptroller, on vouchers approved and certified by the commissioner of health.

8. To the extent practicable, the commissioner of health shall ensure that all monies received during a fiscal year are expended prior to the end of that fiscal year.

§ 3. 1. A distinctive plate established pursuant to section 404-ff of the vehicle and traffic law as added by section one of this act shall only be designed, produced and issued upon the delivery to the department of motor vehicles of a surety bond in the amount of six thousand dollars, which shall be executed by a surety company authorized by the department of financial services to transact business in this state. Provided, however, that if the commissioner shall have received prior to the plate design, production and issuance at least two hundred orders for such distinctive plate together with the additional annual service charge applicable to each such order, which shall be non-refundable, no such surety bond shall be required. All such service charges shall be deposited pursuant to the provisions of section 404-oo of the vehicle and traffic law to the credit of the feeling rural good health care fund established by section 97-bbbbb of the state finance law and shall be used for the design, production, advertising and distribution of distinctive license plates in accordance with such section 97-bbbbb.

2. If, upon the expiration of two years following the date upon which distinctive plates in the series are first available for sale two hundred or more sets of such plates are sold, a bond delivered pursuant to this section shall be discontinued. If fewer than two hundred sets of such plates are sold by such time, the department shall be entitled to recover against the bond in an amount proportionate to such shortfall.

§ 4. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after it shall have become a law; provided, however, that section three of this act shall take effect immediately. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.