§ 404-l. Distinctive regional design plates. 1. On or after October first, nineteen hundred ninety-two, any person residing in this state shall, upon request, be issued a license plate with a distinctive regional design approved by the commissioner. The commissioner may also issue such distinctive plates with special numerals and/or letters requested by the applicant. Application for said license plate shall be filed with the commissioner in such form and detail as the commissioner shall prescribe.

2. A distinctive plate issued pursuant to this section shall be issued in the same manner as other number plates upon payment of the regular registration fee prescribed by section four hundred one of this article provided, however, that an additional annual service charge of thirty-one dollars and twenty-five cents shall be charged for such plates, and provided that a further additional annual service charge of thirty-one dollars and twenty-five cents shall be charged for any such plate containing specially requested numerals and/or letters. Provided, however, in lieu of the annual fee specified herein, the commissioner may establish specific categories of plates for which an annual fee of not less than eighteen dollars and seventy-five cents nor more than thirty-one dollars and twenty-five cents may be charged subject to the approval of the director of the division of the budget. Notwithstanding any inconsistent provision of this section, the difference collected between the annual service charge or fee set forth in this subdivision in effect on and after September first, two thousand nine and the annual service charge or fee set forth in this subdivision in effect prior to such date shall be deposited to the credit of the dedicated highway and bridge trust fund.