

SENATE BILL 656

By Tracy

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

WHEREAS, while over 320 species of hummingbirds exist in the Americas, only one hummingbird, the ruby-throated hummingbird, is found in appreciable numbers east of the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, each spring, this marvelous little bird furiously flutters its diminutive wings across the backyards and gardens of thousands of enchanted Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, sometimes well meaning individuals create attractive nuisances and provide feeders containing artificial nectars dangerous to hummingbirds; and

WHEREAS, if feeders are used, a simple homemade nectar can be made from one part white, granulated table sugar to four parts water, boiled to make it easier to dissolve the sugar and purify the solution so that it will stay fresh longer, with the cooled nectar then used in the feeder; and

WHEREAS, honey, artificial sweeteners, and red food coloring should always be avoided; and

WHEREAS, feeders should be emptied and thoroughly cleaned every four to five days in hot summer weather to prevent spoilage and inhibit mold; and

WHEREAS, attracted to many flowers, reds and oranges, a natural hummingbird garden can be planted using plants such as shrimp plants, bee balm, Heliconia, Buddleja, Hibiscus, bromeliads, cannas, verbenas, honeysuckles, salvias, pentas, fuchsias and penstemons; and

WHEREAS, if trapped indoors, a hummingbird will try to escape upwards and may be delicately captured by hand or coaxed onto a broom or branch and then released; and

WHEREAS, these fascinating creatures should be cherished, protected, and understood so all Tennesseans may enjoy them now and in the future; 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:

(_) Hummingbird awareness;

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 55, Chapter 4, Part 2, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated 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 hummingbird awareness 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 an adult male ruby-throated hummingbird and shall include the ruby-throated hummingbird's scientific name "Archilochus colubris".

(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 ruby-throated hummingbird, and the protection and enhancement of such species' habitats.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2013, the public welfare requiring it.