



**LICENSE TO ROAM :**  
**VANITY LICENSE PLATES AND THE GR8 STORIES THEY TELL™**  
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**NWZ [NEWS]**

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## **GOVERNOR SANFORD SHOULD VETO THE "COON HUNTERS" SPECIAL LICENSE PL8**

CROTON-ON-HUDSON, NY – "I think it was a mistake for the a South Carolina General Assembly to approve a new special license plate that will say, '**COON HUNTERS**,' because it will be misinterpreted as a derogatory racial slur," Stefan Lonce, the author of the forthcoming book, *LCNS2ROM – LICENSE TO ROAM: VANITY LICENSE PLATES AND THE GR8 STORIES THEY TELL*, said.

S. 1392, authorizing new special plates, which have distinct designs and promote organizations or causes, includes a **COON HUNTERS** plate sponsored by the South Carolina Coon Hunters Association. "If the plate had been changed to say '**RACCOON HUNTERS**,' as the House version of the bill provided, then the problem would have been solved, but the sponsor reportedly wouldn't agree. I hope that Governor Sanford vetoes the bill," Lonce said.

"The **COON HUNTERS** plate is even worse than the '**I BELIEVE**' plate, with an image of a cross, which a federal judge ruled was an unconstitutional 'endorsement' of Christianity," Lonce said. "I, and other observers, predicted in 2008 that South Carolina would lose in court if it issued the **I BELIEVE** plate. The DMV and Department of Corrections lost the **I BELIEVE** plate case and were ordered to pay the Plaintiffs' attorneys fees, which could force reductions in DMV services and could result in early releases of prisoners by the deficit-plagued DOC. This could happen again, if South Carolina issues the **COON HUNTERS** plate," Lonce said.

Lonce has posted a petition on his web site protesting the **COON HUNTERS** plate, which can be accessed by clicking on the **South Carolina PL8 Info** button on the home page at [www.VanityPlatesBook.com](http://www.VanityPlatesBook.com).

According to Lonce, "The DMV already offers 127 different plates, many of which are hard-to-read, prompting complaints from law enforcement, and the fiscally-distressed Palmetto State can no longer afford to share special plate fees with plate sponsors. The General Assembly could solve these problems by mandating that only state entities may sponsor new special plates, and by issuing only one new special plate each year. South Carolinians should choose each year's new special plate in an online vote, as they chose the design of the current standard license plate."

"South Carolina should also promote personalized ["vanity"] plates, because it needs the money," Lonce said. South Carolinians have "vanitized" only about 45,000 motor vehicles, ranking the state 45th in vanity plates. The DMV charges \$30 every two years for a vanity plate and issues plates with seven or fewer characters.

"South Carolina could dramatically increase its income from vanity plates if the DMV were given a vanity plates marketing budget, if DMV personnel would ask motorists if they'd like to vanitize when performing other transactions, if DMV offices would display posters and distribute brochures promoting vanity plates, and if special plates could be vanitized," Lonce said. "Vanity plates empower South Carolinians to tell the shortest of stories, or promote causes. Vanity plates are minimalist poetry in motion, and could be far more lucrative for South Carolina than they are now."

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