

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

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SENATE BILL DRS15048-ML-56

Short Title: Use Tribal ID for Alcohol & Tobacco Purchase. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Johnson, Corbin, and Lazzara (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ALLOW THE USE OF A TRIBAL ENROLLMENT CARD ISSUED BY A  
3 FEDERAL RECOGNIZED TRIBE WHEN MAKING ALCOHOL OR TOBACCO  
4 PURCHASES.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6 SECTION 1. G.S. 18B-302(d) reads as rewritten:

7 "(d) Defense. – It is a defense to a violation of subsection (a) of this section if the seller  
8 does any of the following:

9 (1) Shows that the purchaser produced a driver's license, a special identification  
10 card issued under G.S. 20-37.7 or issued by the state agency of any other state  
11 authorized to issue similar official state special identification cards for that  
12 state, a tribal enrollment card issued by a federal recognized tribe, a military  
13 identification card, or a passport, showing the purchaser's age to be at least the  
14 required age for purchase and bearing a physical description of the person  
15 named on the card reasonably describing the purchaser.

16 ...

17 (3) Shows that at the time of purchase, the purchaser utilized a biometric  
18 identification system that demonstrated (i) the purchaser's age to be at least  
19 the required age for the purchase and (ii) the purchaser had previously  
20 registered with the seller or seller's agent a drivers license, a special  
21 identification card issued under G.S. 20-37.7 or issued by the state agency of  
22 any other state authorized to issue similar official state special identification  
23 cards for that state, a tribal enrollment card issued by a federal recognized  
24 tribe, a military identification card, or a passport showing the purchaser's date  
25 of birth and bearing a physical description of the person named on the  
26 document."

27 SECTION 2. G.S. 14-313 reads as rewritten:

28 "§ 14-313. Youth access to tobacco products, tobacco-derived products, vapor products,  
29 and cigarette wrapping papers.

30 (a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

31 ...

32 (2) Proof of age. – A drivers ~~license~~ license, a tribal enrollment card issued by a  
33 federal recognized tribe, or other photographic identification that includes the  
34 bearer's date of birth that purports to establish that the person is 18 years of  
35 age or older.

36 ...



1 (b) Sale or distribution to persons under the age of 18 years. – If any person shall  
2 distribute, or aid, assist, or abet any other person in distributing tobacco products or cigarette  
3 wrapping papers to any person under the age of 18 years, or if any person shall purchase tobacco  
4 products or cigarette wrapping papers on behalf of a person under the age of 18 years, the person  
5 shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor; provided, however, that it shall not be unlawful to  
6 distribute tobacco products or cigarette wrapping papers to an employee when required in the  
7 performance of the employee's duties. Retail distributors of tobacco products shall prominently  
8 display near the point of sale a sign in letters at least five-eighths of an inch high which states the  
9 following:

10 N.C. LAW STRICTLY PROHIBITS  
11 THE PURCHASE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS, TOBACCO-DERIVED PRODUCTS,  
12 VAPOR PRODUCTS, AND CIGARETTE WRAPPING PAPERS  
13 BY PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18.  
14 PROOF OF AGE REQUIRED.

15 Failure to post the required sign shall be an infraction punishable by a fine of twenty-five dollars  
16 (\$25.00) for the first offense and seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for each succeeding offense.

17 A person engaged in the sale of tobacco products or cigarette wrapping papers shall demand  
18 proof of age from a prospective purchaser if the person has reasonable grounds to believe that  
19 the prospective purchaser is under 18 years of age. Failure to demand proof of age as required by  
20 this subsection is a Class 2 misdemeanor if in fact the prospective purchaser is under 18 years of  
21 age. Retail distributors of tobacco products or cigarette wrapping papers shall train their sales  
22 employees in the requirements of this law. Proof of any of the following shall be a defense to any  
23 action brought under this subsection:

- 24 (1) The defendant demanded, was shown, and reasonably relied upon proof of age  
25 in the case of a retailer, or any other documentary or written evidence of age  
26 in the case of a nonretailer.
- 27 (2) The defendant relied on the electronic system established and operated by the  
28 Division of Motor Vehicles pursuant to G.S. 20-37.02.
- 29 (3) The defendant relied on a biometric identification system that demonstrated  
30 (i) the purchaser's age to be at least the required age for the purchase and (ii)  
31 the purchaser had previously registered with the seller or seller's agent a  
32 drivers license, a special identification card issued under G.S. 20-37.7, a tribal  
33 enrollment card issued by a federal recognized tribe, a military identification  
34 card, or a passport showing the purchaser's date of birth and bearing a physical  
35 description of the person named on the card.

36 ...

37 (d) Sending or assisting a person less than 18 years to purchase or receive tobacco  
38 products or cigarette wrapping papers. – If any person shall send a person less than 18 years of  
39 age to purchase, acquire, receive, or attempt to purchase, acquire, or receive tobacco products or  
40 cigarette wrapping papers, or if any person shall aid or abet a person who is less than 18 years of  
41 age in purchasing, acquiring, or receiving or attempting to purchase, acquire, or receive tobacco  
42 products or cigarette wrapping papers, the person shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor;  
43 provided, however, persons under the age of 18 may be enlisted by police or local sheriffs'  
44 departments to test compliance if the testing is under the direct supervision of that law  
45 enforcement department and written parental consent is provided; provided further, that the  
46 Department of Health and Human Services shall have the authority, pursuant to a written plan  
47 prepared by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, to use persons under 18 years of age  
48 in annual, random, unannounced inspections, provided that prior written parental consent is given  
49 for the involvement of these persons and that the inspections are conducted for the sole purpose  
50 of preparing a scientifically and methodologically valid statistical study of the extent of success  
51 the State has achieved in reducing the availability of tobacco products to persons under the age

1 of 18, and preparing any report to the extent required by section 1926 of the federal Public Health  
2 Service Act (42 USC § 300x-26).  
3 ...."  
4 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2023, and applies to purchases made  
5 on or after that date.