

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Authorizing Special License Plates for Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity

03/6/2023

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed legislation (A978) recognizing the contributions and achievements of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. by establishing special license plates for members of the organization. Kappa Alpha Psi is the second oldest existing collegiate historically Black Greek Letter Fraternity and a member of the National Pan-Hellenic Council, also known as the Divine Nine. The legislation signed today authorizes the Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission to issue special Kappa Alpha Psi license plates. The bill provides that the design of the Kappa Alpha Psi license plate would display appropriate words and an emblem honoring the fraternity.

Governor Murphy was joined today by Kappa Alpha Psi 34th Grand Polemarch Reuben A. Shelton III, Esq., Northeastern Province Polemarch Christopher Thompkins, Polemarch Stephen White, Trenton Chapter Founding Member and Alumni Samuel Floyd, legislators, and Kappa Alpha Psi members, mentees, and alumni.

"I am proud to sign legislation authorizing the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission to issue special license plates for the distinguished members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity," **said Governor Murphy**. "For 112 years, Kappa Alpha Psi has stood for progress, equality, and brotherhood. As a member of the Divine Nine, it has stood as a national leader in community service efforts large and small and its members have made invaluable contributions across every facet of society. Today, we commend Kappa Alpha Psi's achievements as we establish this keepsake to be proudly displayed by its members."

"The Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity is one of the most respected fraternities in the state and in the country because of its members' dedication to brotherhood, community service, and strengthening civil rights," **said Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, who serves as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs**. "By establishing a Kappa Alpha Psi license plate, our state is recognizing this history of excellence and leadership, as well as members' contributions to creating positive change in their communities and the country."

The Chief Administrator, in consultation with the Northeastern Province Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi, will select the design and color scheme of the Kappa Alpha Psi license plates. In addition to all fees otherwise required by law for the registration of a motor vehicle, the bill provides an application fee of \$50 and an annual renewal fee of \$10 for each Kappa Alpha Psi license plate. Under the bill, these fee collections would first be used to reimburse the commission for certain costs incurred in the implementation of the license plate program. Thereafter, the additional fees would be deposited into a special non-lapsing fund, known as the "Kappa Alpha Psi License Plate Fund," which monies would be annually appropriated to Kappa Alpha Psi to support the organization's mission and programs.

"As one of the oldest Black fraternities in the country, recently celebrating 112 years of achievement, Kappa Alpha Psi is a proud organization that is a symbol of resilience and community. Its members and alumni have made countless contributions to the fabric of our lives in New Jersey, and across the nation and world," **said Motor Vehicle Commission Acting Chief Administrator Latrecia Littles-Floyd**. "With this legislation, the MVC is eager to work with Kappa Alpha Psi to oversee the design and issuance of a license plate that will help commemorate the accomplishments of this historic fraternity in New Jersey."

"I am pleased and honored to attend this momentous occasion with the Governor and my Fraternity brothers today," **said 34th Grand Polemarch, Reuben A. Shelton III, International President and CEO, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity**. "It is gratifying the State of New Jersey recognizes the significance and impact of Kappa Alpha Psi and all Black Greek letter organizations that we proudly and affectionately proclaim as The D9. Kappa is rooted in community service and civic engagement. We pledge to help the Governor and the State of New Jersey in all endeavors that promote the welfare of its citizens."

"The Northeastern Province of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated is extremely thankful for the support from Governor Phil Murphy and the New Jersey Legislature for passing Bill S2587 that authorizes issuance of Kappa Alpha Psi license plates," **said Christopher J. Thompkins, Northeastern Province Polemarch**. "It is my distinct honor to participate in the official signing of the bill into law by Governor Phil Murphy on Monday, March 6th, 2023."

"For 112 years, Kappa Alpha Psi has been a beacon of service," **said Polemarch Stephen White**. "As a member of this noble fraternity for 33 years, and current Polemarch of the Maplewood-Oranges Alumni, this is truly an exciting day! The signing of this license plate bill will show across the great state of New Jersey how the men of Kappa Alpha Psi continue to strive for Achievement."

Sponsors of the legislation include Senators Shirley K. Turner and Nia H. Gill, and Assemblymembers Verlina Reynolds-Jackson and Benjie E. Wimberly.

"Kappa Alpha Psi has been a progressive and invaluable organization since its founding 112 years ago, and we are grateful for the positive change, leadership, and service they bring to our communities," **said Senator Shirley Turner**. "I am proud to join in paying tribute to this national organization and the brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi, who exemplify excellence in everything they do."

"This honor is a testament to the exceptional contributions of Kappa Alpha Psi and their impact on their communities," **said Senator Gill**. "The license plate celebrates and reminds us of the fraternity's hard work, dedication, and commitment to promoting academic excellence and leadership development. Congratulations to Kappa Alpha Psi on this well-deserved recognition."

"Specialty license plates are a great way for residents to celebrate the issues and organizations that matter most to them," **said Assemblywoman Reynolds-Jackson**. "Kappa Alpha Psi—a fraternity created to give African American students an opportunity to network and bond over the discrimination they faced—boasts 112 years of community service since their founding in 1911. Its members deserve the chance to display their pride in this manner."

"This is about giving recognition to an organization steeped in Black history that has given so many men in New Jersey, and across the country, the opportunity to serve their communities and build lasting relationships," said **Assemblyman Wimberly**. "Custom license plates will give Kappa Alpha Psi members in our state another way to show pride in their fraternity."

"I am extremely proud to see our Governor prioritize the signing of the bill to highlight the brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi, Inc. and shine a light in the organization's history and their contributions to our educational and general communities," said **Assemblywoman Carter, Co-Sponsor of the legislation**. "I look forward to seeing our brothers soon displaying their new license plates in our Jersey roads."

"As a mentee of the Trenton Alumni Kappa League, I have seen firsthand how Kappa Alpha Psi makes an impact on their communities," said **Tajon Wadley**. "Without this program, I would not be the person I am today. I am grateful for my mentors in the Trenton Alumni Kappa League and to Governor Murphy for establishing this license plate."

The bill requires the Chief Administrator to annually certify the average cost of producing, issuing, renewing, and publicizing the availability of the specialty license plates. The bill also requires the Northeastern Province Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi to appoint a liaison to represent the Northeastern Province of Kappa Alpha Psi in all communications with the commission regarding the license plate program.

Kappa Alpha Psi was founded on the campus of Indiana University on January 5, 1911. Kappa Alpha Psi is currently comprised of undergraduate and alumni chapters on major campuses and in cities throughout the country. It is the second oldest existing collegiate historically Black Greek Letter Fraternity and the first intercollegiate Fraternity incorporated as a national body. The Fraternity has over 125,000 members, with 700 undergraduate and alumni chapters in nearly every state as well as international chapters.

Governor Phil Murphy

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