

April 18, 2007

H 1793. UNLAWFULLY REMOVE TREES & VEGETATION/PENALTY. Filed 4/18/07. *TO IMPOSE A MINIMUM FINE FOR UNLAWFULLY REMOVING OR TRIMMING A TREE LOCATED ON A STATE ROAD OR HIGHWAY AND TO PROVIDE THAT VEGETATION IN FRONT OF OR ADJACENT TO OUTDOOR ADVERTISING AND ALSO LOCATED ON A HIGHWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY SHALL NOT BE REMOVED WITHOUT A PERMIT.*

Amends GS 136-93 to impose a fine of at least \$2,000 for violations for trimming or removing a tree located on a state road or highway. Enacts new GS 136-133.1 to prohibit the removal or trimming of vegetation that is in front of an outdoor advertisement (billboard) and within the limits of highway rights-of-way in order to enhance visibility of the billboard, unless permitted by the Department of Transportation (DOT). Permits may be granted only for advertising locations that have been permitted for at least two years, at the DOT's sole discretion. If the individual legally responsible for the billboard removes vegetation to enhance visibility, the billboard is illegal, and must be removed at the individual's expense, and the individual will not be eligible for a permit for a billboard for a set time period based on the number of violations committed. Anyone committing a violation must reimburse DOT for cleaning or replanting, and will not be issued a permit for outdoor advertising until the expenses are paid. Effective for offenses committed on or after December 1, 2007.

Intro. by Luebke.

GS 136