

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1500

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

**Title:** An act relating to the creation of a special license plate dedicated to raising revenue to fund preventative wolf management efforts at the department of fish and wildlife.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the creation of a special license plate dedicated to raising revenue to fund preventative wolf management efforts at the department of fish and wildlife.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Lytton, Kretz, Ryu and Bergquist.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 2/5/13, 2/14/13 [DP].

#### **Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates the Washington's Wolves special license plate.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Bergquist, Farrell, Fitzgibbon, Freeman, Habib, Hayes, Johnson, Klippert, Kochmar, Kretz, Kristiansen, Moeller, Morris, O'Ban, Riccelli, Rodne, Ryu, Sells, Takko, Tarleton, Upthegrove and Zeiger.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Shea.

**Staff:** Paul Ingiosi (786-7114).

#### **Background:**

The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues special vehicle license plates that may be used in lieu of standard plates. A governmental or nonprofit sponsoring organization seeking to sponsor a special plate either submits an application to the DOL or requests legislation to

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create the special plate. The sponsoring organization seeking to sponsor the special plate is required to reimburse the DOL for the costs of establishing the new special plate. There is a moratorium on the issuance of new special plates by the DOL until June 30, 2013.

For special license plates that are enacted by the Legislature, a sponsoring organization must, within 30 days of enactment, submit prepayment of all start-up costs to the DOL. If the sponsoring organization is not able to meet the prepayment requirement, revenues generated from the sale of the special license plate are first used to pay off any costs associated with establishing the new plate. The sponsoring organization must also provide a proposed license plate design to the DOL. Additionally, the sponsoring organization must submit an annual financial report to the DOL detailing actual revenues generated from the sale of the special license plate. The reports are reviewed, approved, and presented to the Joint Transportation Committee.

The DOL collects special license plate fees and, for administrative expenses, deducts an amount not to exceed \$12 for new plate issuance and \$2 for renewal. After these expenses are paid, the State Treasurer deposits proceeds into the Motor Vehicle Account until the DOL determines the start-up costs for a special license plate are paid.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The bill creates a Washington's Wolves special license plate which would display a symbol or artwork of a wolf. In addition to all fees and taxes required to be paid upon application for a vehicle registration, a fee of \$40 would be charged for a Washington's Wolves special license plate and a \$30 fee is charged for renewal of a special license plate.

Proceeds from the sale of Washington's Wolves special license plates are deposited in the State Wildlife Account for use by the Department of Fish and Wildlife in their preventative wolf management efforts.

The bill exempts the Washington's Wolves special license plate from the moratorium on new special license plates.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The Wolf Conservation and Management Plan gives guidance for the prevention of conflict between wolves and livestock using nonlethal methods. Now is the time to fulfill

the provisions of the plan. Preventative nonlethal measures include wolf tracking, increasing human presence, and helping livestock owners clean and sanitize boneyards. The specialty plate is the funding mechanism through which mitigation efforts can be undertaken allowing re-colonization of wolves in Washington. We all benefit from species recovery; the top predators play a crucial role in maintaining the ecosystem. Other states such as Montana and Wisconsin have similar plates that are successful in generating funds. Finding common ground between stakeholders is rare where wolves are involved, but the bill actually is successful at it. The provisions of the bill respect the time put in by Washington citizens and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to create a roadmap for the recovery and management of Washington wolves by upholding the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.

(Information only) The one-time \$59,000 implementation cost would be split proportionately across sponsoring organizations. Implementation costs for specialty license plates were last reviewed five years ago; the cost increase is due to higher programming costs from contractors. There are five specialty plates under consideration in the Senate and one in the House of Representatives.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Lytton, prime sponsor; Dave Ware, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association; Dan Paul, The Humane Society of the United States; and Linda Saunders, Wolf Haven International.

(Information only) Tony Sermonti, Department of Licensing.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.