

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5536

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As of February 21, 2017

**Title:** An act relating to providing funding for the hunter education training program operated by the department of fish and wildlife through the issuance of national rifle association special license plates.

**Brief Description:** Providing funding for the hunter education training program operated by the department of fish and wildlife through the issuance of national rifle association special license plates.

**Sponsors:** Senator Fortunato.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 2/20/17.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates a National Rifle Association special license plate to support firearm safety and education.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Staff:** Kellee Keegan (786-7429)

**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 must submit documentation to the DOL that verifies the organization is either a 501c3 nonprofit as defined in federal law, or is located in Washington State and has registered as a charitable organization with the Secretary of State's Office. The organization may be permitted to sponsor a plate if it is a professional sports franchise and is using the profits in conjunction with a 501c3 nonprofit organization. A governmental body may also qualify for a special license plate.

An organization that meets statutory requirements regarding special plate sponsorship must then supply the DOL with the following:

- prepayment of startup costs;
- the design of the special license plate;

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- a marketing strategy and financial analysis regarding anticipated revenue and expenditures;
- proposed legislation and a signature of the legislative sponsor;
- proof of the organization's qualifications to sponsor a special plate; and
- signature sheets containing at least 3500 signatures of individuals who intend to purchase the special plate.

Three years must pass before an application is reviewed again after approval by the DOL.

Within 30 days of legislative enactment, the DOL shall enter a written agreement with the sponsoring organization. The revenues generated by the special plate must be for the benefit of the public and be spent within the state. The sponsoring organization is required to reimburse the DOL for the costs of establishing the new special plate. Startup costs for 2017 are \$6,300 unless six or more plates are approved by the Legislature, at which time each legislatively-approved organization would need to provide an additional \$32,000. If the state is not reimbursed within two years, the special plate is put on probationary status for one year. If the startup costs have not been paid within the probation year, the special plate will be discontinued. Disbursement of the revenue generated from the sale of the special license plate to the sponsoring organization is contingent upon the organization meeting DOL's reporting and review requirements. 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 the proceeds into the Motor Vehicle fund until the DOL determines the start-up costs for a special license plate are paid.

If the sponsoring organization ceases to exist, the revenues generated must be deposited into the Motor Vehicle fund.

**Summary of Bill:** The National Rifle Association (NRA) special license plate, displaying the NRA logo, is created. In addition to all fees and taxes that are required to be paid for a vehicle registration, a fee of \$40 is charged for an original issue NRA special license plate, and a \$30 fee is charged for renewal of a special license plate. Proceeds from the NRA special license plate must support firearm safety and education as part of the Department of Fish and Wildlife's hunter education training program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on January 1, 2018.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This bill has been in the works for ten years. This is a great opportunity to fund hunter education. Youth programs are the cornerstone of the NRA. Programs such as 4-H and Boy Scouts of America are NRA partners in this. There are over 115,000 members of the NRA in the state of Washington. The NRA special plate would be popular and beneficial to the state of Washington.

OTHER: The Department of Fish and Wildlife supports additional funding for hunter education. This is a required program in the state for anyone seeking a hunting license. Hunter education certifies 1400 people every year. There used to be about 40 hunting incidents a year, now there are only seven. Hunter education is important and should be supported.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Phil Fortunato, Prime Sponsor; James Williams, Tacoma Sportsmen's Club and many NRA members.

OTHER: David Whipple, WDFW.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.