

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2571

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to armed forces and veterans license plates.

Brief Description: Modifying armed forces provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Seaquist, McCoy, McCune, Conway, Hurst, Haigh, Morrell, Campbell, VanDeWege, Chase, Barlow, Green and Simpson; by request of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 1/21/08, 1/29/08 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Deletes references to Washington when referring to the National Guard special license plate.
- Allows other family members besides spouses of living or deceased veterans and current service members to receive an armed forces special license plate.
- Allows funds from the Veterans Stewardship Account to be used to benefit the families of veterans.
- Changes the eligibility criteria for receiving a prisoner of war special license plate.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Flannigan, Vice Chair; Ericksen, Ranking Minority Member; Schindler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Armstrong, Campbell, Eddy, Herrera, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kristiansen, Loomis, Rolfes, Sells, Simpson, Smith, Springer, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace, Warnick, Williams and Wood.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Teresa Berntsen (786-7301).

Background:

The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues special vehicle license plates that can be used in lieu of standard plates.

The armed forces special license plates are a series of six plates that contain a symbol representing different branches of the armed forces. The special plates are available only to veterans, active duty military personnel, reservists, members of the Washington National Guard, and spouses of deceased veterans. The charge is \$40 above the standard licensing fee for initial issuance, and \$30 above the standard fee for renewal. The DOL also issues decals free of charge to be placed on a license plate that indicate the purchaser's military status.

Proceeds from the sale of the armed forces license plates are deposited into the Veterans Stewardship Account (Account). The Washington State Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) may also accept grants and gifts to deposit into the Account. The Account must be used by the DVA for activities that benefit veterans.

The DOL issues former prisoner of war special license plates free of charge to veterans who were held captive during a period of war for more than 29 days.

Summary of Bill:

The bill deletes references to Washington when referring to the National Guard special license plate.

In addition to spouses, other family members of living or deceased veterans and current service members may purchase an armed forces special license plate and receive a decal.

The eligibility criteria to receive a prisoner of war special license plate is changed from a veteran who was held captive during a period of war for more than 29 days to a veteran who was held captive and received a Prisoner of War Medal.

In addition to veterans, families of veterans may receive funds from the Account through the DVA.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill will make a valuable difference in the lives of military families by allowing family members to display military plates and to benefit from the proceeds of the sale of those plates. The bill will help the DVA assist family members of veterans, as well as veterans, who have an immediate financial need.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Seaquist, prime sponsor; John Lee, Department of Veterans Affairs; and Mike Partridge, Veteran's Legislative Coalition.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.