
Transportation Committee

HB 2489

Brief Description: Creating several new special license plates.

Sponsors: Representatives Orcutt, Donaghy and Schmidt.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the LeMay-America's Car Museum special license plate, the Mount St. Helens special license plate, the Smokey Bear special license plate, and the Working Forests special license plate.
- Establishes both original and renewal fees for the special license plates.
- Directs proceeds from the special license plates for various purposes.

Hearing Date: 2/2/24

Staff: Michael Hirsch (786-7195).

Background:

The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues special vehicle license plates that may be used in lieu of standard plates. An organization seeking to sponsor a special license plate must be a nonprofit organization, a professional sports franchise working in conjunction with a nonprofit organization, or a government agency. The sponsoring organization may choose one of two ways of creating a special license plate.

Application Process and Legislation.

In this method, a sponsoring organization submits an application to the DOL prior to pursuing legislation. The application packet must include the design of the special license plate, proof of 3,500 signatures in support of the special license plate, and the start-up fee of \$6,300. After the DOL approves the application, the sponsoring organization must pursue legislation to create the

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special license plate.

Legislation Without the Department of Licensing's Review.

In this method, a sponsoring organization pursues legislation without applying to the DOL first. Once the bill is enacted, the sponsoring organization must provide the design of the special license plate and the startup fee of \$6,300 to the DOL within 30 days.

In both methods, if the sponsoring organization can prove that they are unable to provide the start-up fee up front, then revenues from the sale of the special license plate will be used to pay this fee. On an annual basis, the sponsoring organization must submit a financial report to the DOL detailing actual revenues from the sale of the special license plate. The DOL compiles these reports and presents them to the transportation committees of the Legislature.

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 (Treasurer) deposits the proceeds into the Motor Vehicle Account until the DOL determines that the start-up fee for a special license plate is paid. Once the start-up fee is paid, the Treasurer credits the remaining special license plate fee amounts into an account specified for the sponsoring organization.

Summary of Bill:

The LeMay-America's Car Museum special license plate, Mount St. Helens special license plate, the Smokey Bear special license plate, and the Working Forests special license plate are created.

In addition to all fees and taxes required to be paid upon application for a vehicle registration, a fee of \$40 is charged for the original issuance of one of the special license plates, and a \$30 fee is charged for the renewal of one of the plates. Revenue from the sale of the different special license plates will be distributed as shown in the table below.

License Plate	Recipient of Funds
LeMay-America's Car Museum	The LeMay-America's Car Museum
Mount St. Helens	The Mount St. Helens Institute
Smokey Bear	The Department of Natural Resources wildfire prevention programs
Working Forest	The Washington Tree Farm Program

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 30, 2024.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on November 1, 2025.