

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2187

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to creating Washington state women veterans special license plates.

Brief Description: Creating Washington state women veterans special license plates.

Sponsors: Representatives Kilduff, Mosbrucker, Morgan, Leavitt, Orwall, Callan, Dufault, Graham, Kraft, Appleton, Paul, Lovick, Chapman, Ryu, Van Werven, Barkis, Slatter, Bergquist, Griffey, Sells, Doglio and Riccelli.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/6/20, 2/10/20 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates the Women Veterans special license plate and establishes original and renewal fees for the special license plate.
- Creates the Women Veterans Account (account) under the authority of the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA).
- Authorizes the DVA to request and accept contributions, grants, or cash to the account, including funds generated by the sales of the Women Veterans special license plate.
- Directs that funds from the account be used for activities that benefit women service members, women veterans, or their families.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 30 members: Representatives Fey, Chair; Wylie, 1st Vice Chair; Slatter, 2nd Vice Chair; Valdez, 2nd Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Young, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Chambers, Chapman, Dent, Doglio, Duerr, Entenman, Eslick, Goehner, Gregerson, Irwin, Kloba, Lovick, McCaslin, Mead, Orcutt, Ortiz-Self, Paul, Ramos, Riccelli, Shewmake, Van Werven and Volz.

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: Christine Thomas (786-7142).

Background:

Special License Plates.

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 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 start-up 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, retains an amount not to exceed \$12 for new plate issuance and \$2 for renewal of the plate. The State Treasurer then deposits the remaining proceeds into the Motor Vehicle Account until the DOL determines that the start-up fee of \$6,300 is paid. Once the start-up fee is paid, the State Treasurer credits the remaining special license plate proceeds into an account specified for the sponsoring organization.

Women Veterans.

According to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, women have served in the military through all periods of United States history. Although women were not formally under military command until the early twentieth century, they fought in disguise during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, as well as acted as spies. Under formal military command, women have served in various capacities including as nurses, truck drivers, intelligence analysts, airplane mechanics, and helicopter pilots in combat zones. Women comprise 10 percent of the nation's veteran population and Washington is home to approximately 58,000 women veterans.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Women Veterans special license plate is created to recognize women veterans. 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 a Women Veterans special license plate, and a \$30 fee is charged for the renewal of the plate. The Women Veterans Account (account) is created under the authority of the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA). The DVA may request and accept nondedicated contributions, grants, or gifts in cash or otherwise, including funds generated by the sales of the Women Veterans special license plate. Funds from the account must be used for activities that benefit women service members, women veterans, or their families.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The Women's Veterans Account is created and the the special license plate fees are deposited to the account to be distributed under the DVA's authority rather than under the DOL's authority. In addition to women veterans, beneficiaries of the use of the funds are expanded to include women service members and families of women veterans and service members.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2020.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Women veterans have contributed to their country in many roles throughout history, including in combat roles, but they were not recognized as veterans until the 1970s. This bill honors the valor, contributions, and sacrifices of women who serve this country. Women face challenges after separating from the military and should be able to identify as veterans without confrontation, as women hesitate to access resources and benefits to veterans because of fear of having to justify their status as a veteran. It is time to change the narrative about women veterans who serve voluntarily. Women sacrifice traditional family roles for their country at great price to their children and families. Recognizing women veterans with a license plate is a step in the right direction to honor their service, raise the visibility of courageous women veterans, encourage them to tell their stories, and help change the cultural bias against women, and specifically women serving in the military.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Kilduff, prime sponsor; Shellie Willis, Redefining You Foundation; Carrol Stripling, Veterans Legislative Coalition and Service Girls 204 American Legion; Shanda Taylor Boyd; Elis Salamone; Liza Narciso, Washington Department of Veterans Affairs; Laura Jones; Tanja Struyck-Fogleman; Kerri Jeter; and Alan Acosta.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.