

2015 -- H 5109

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- VETERAN COURTESY
REGISTRATION PLATE

Introduced By: Representative Patricia A.Serpa

Date Introduced: January 15, 2015

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 31-3-53 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-3 entitled "Registration
2 of Vehicles" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-3-53. Veterans' plates.** -- (a) The registrar of motor vehicles shall issue for any motor
4 vehicle eligible for registration as an automobile, or for any motorcycle eligible for registration as
5 a motorcycle, or for a commercial vehicle having a gross weight of twelve thousand pounds
6 (12,000 lbs.) or less, plates designated as "Veteran", "Purple Heart", and "Ex-POW" upon
7 application on proper forms furnished by the administrator of the division of motor vehicles to
8 veterans. Gold Star parents shall also be eligible for plates designated as "Veteran".

9 (b) The special plate designated "Veteran" shall be designed as follows;

10 (1) Letters and numbers shall be blue in a white background with the words "Rhode
11 Island" clearly visible at the top center of the plate and the word "Veteran" visible at the bottom
12 center of the plate.

13 (2) The background will be a red, white, and blue waving American Flag.

14 (3) On the top right corner will be a decal with the military branch of the service in
15 which the Veteran served (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and
16 Gold Star Parent).

17 (4) For war veterans, a white decal with blue letters with the words "War Veteran"
18 placed under the military branch decal on the right side of the plate above the validation sticker.

1 (c) The applicant shall be required to pay a service charge of twenty dollars (\$20.00) and
2 a transfer charge of five dollars (\$5.00) for each plate.

3 (1) The plate designated as a "veteran" plate shall be available with the letters, numbers,
4 or combination thereof currently assigned to the applicant at no additional charge for the issuance
5 or transfer of that registration to the veteran plate, except as otherwise provided for in this section.

6 (d) The applicant shall be entitled to a plate for each vehicle owned by the applicant upon
7 payment of an additional service charge and/or transfer charge for each vehicle.

8 (e) The owner of a motor vehicle eligible for registration as a commercial vehicle and
9 having a gross weight of twelve thousand pounds (12,000 lbs.) or less who is issued veteran
10 plates shall continue to pay the appropriate commercial registration fee for those plates. The
11 owner of a motor vehicle eligible for registration as a commercial vehicle having a gross weight
12 of six thousand three hundred pounds (6,300 lbs.) but not more than twelve thousand pounds
13 (12,000 lbs.) shall sign an affidavit at the time of application for said plates stating that the
14 vehicle is to be used for personal use only.

15 (f) (1) For the purposes of this section, a "veteran" shall be defined as any person who
16 has served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States. The term "veteran" shall also
17 include members of the National Guard and Reserves: (i) Called to active duty authorized by the
18 President of the United States or the Secretary of Defense; or (ii) Who have twenty (20) years of
19 service with a letter and record of separation of service.

20 (2) For the purposes of this section, "War Veteran" shall be defined as any veteran of any
21 conflict or undeclared war who has earned a campaign ribbon or expeditionary medal for service
22 in either a declared or undeclared war as noted on the war veteran's DD-214. Upon the death of
23 the holder of any veteran plates, the plates shall be transferred to the surviving spouse for the
24 spouse's lifetime until he or she remarries.

25 (g) The "veteran" or "war veteran" described in subdivisions (f)(1)(i) or (ii) and (2) must
26 have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of this nation in order to receive plates
27 pursuant to this section and, for purposes of this section, a medical discharge or a general
28 discharge shall be deemed an honorable discharge.

29 (h) For the purpose of this section, "Gold Star Parent" means a person who has lost a son
30 or a daughter as a result of service with the armed forces of the United States of America;
31 provided, the death was determined to be in the line of duty.

32 (i) Veterans who have served in multiple conflicts are entitled to be issued veterans'
33 plates equal to the number of conflicts he or she served in; provided, the plates are limited to the
34 number of vehicles owned by the veteran.

1 (j) A person shall be eligible for a veterans' plate if his or her deceased spouse was
2 eligible for a veterans' plate, notwithstanding the fact that the eligible, deceased spouse died prior
3 to the enactment of this section in 1988.

4 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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- 1 This act would allow an existing registration to be transferred to a veteran plate.
- 2 This act would take effect upon passage.

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