

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5423

As Passed Senate, March 12, 2005

Title: An act relating to special license plates.

Brief Description: Regulating special license plates.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen and Swecker.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/14/05, 3/1/05 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 3/12/05, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5423 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Jacobsen, Vice Chair; Poulsen, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Benson, Eide, Esser, Kastama, Mulliken, Oke, Spanel and Weinstein.

Staff: Kimberly Johnson (786-7346)

Background: The Special License Plate Review Board was created in the 2003 session and charged with reviewing special license plate applications from groups requesting the creation of a special plate. A special license plate applicant must either: (1) pre-pay the implementation costs; or (2) submit signature sheets representing 2,000 intended plate purchases and an application fee of \$2,000. For those applicants who cannot prepay, the initial revenue generated from the plate sales must be deposited into the motor vehicle account until the state has been reimbursed for the implementation costs. The state must be reimbursed within two years from the initial date of sale or the plate series will be put on probation for one year. If the state has not been fully reimbursed at the end of the probationary period, the plate series must be discontinued.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) offers disabled parking emblem versions of special license plates to persons who qualify for disabled parking privileges. Persons applying for a disabled parking emblem for a special license plate must pay the appropriate special license plate fee. The disabled parking emblem version of a special license plate is administered in the same manner as the special disabled parking license plates currently issued by DOL.

Summary of Bill: DOL is authorized to offer personalized special license plates. Persons applying to purchase a personalized special license plate must pay both the fee for the special plate and the fee for a personalized plate.

DOL must offer a disabled parking emblem for both personalized license plates and special plates that are personalized.

The special license plate design services fee is reduced from \$1,500 to \$200 dollars for the first six renditions, and to \$100 dollars for any subsequent rendition.

The special license plate application requirements are changed in the following ways: (1) the application option of submitting signature sheets with 2,000 signatures and an application fee of \$2,000 is removed; and (2) an applicant must provide 3,500 signatures with prepayment to the special license plate review board, and an applicant for a license plate collection must include 3,500 signatures multiplied by the number of plates in the collection.

The Special License Plate Review Board is prohibited from accepting or approving any applications until June 1, 2007. The legislature may not enact a special plate during this time unless the plate has been approved by the Special License Plate Review Board before February 15, 2005. The Special License Plate Review Board is required to make a policy recommendation to DOL concerning limiting the ability of governmental bodies and 501(c)(3) organizations to apply for more than one special license plate. DOL is required to adopt a rule pursuant to the Board's policy recommendation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

Testimony For: We support the option to be able to personalize a special license plate. We had a great number of people express interest in the ability to personalize a special license plate. We have some concerns about the moratorium as we are trying to get more signatures to support additional wildlife plates.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Dave Ware, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Lynda Henriksen, Department of Licensing.

House Amendment(s): The House amendment removes the creation of the pedestrian and bicycle grant program and the new account to support the program. The amendment also removes the distribution of ten dollars of the fee for a personalized special license plate to the pedestrian and bicycle grant program account.

Passed House: 63 - 34