

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6830

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 6, 2006

Title: An act relating to "Support Our Troops" special license plates.

Brief Description: Creating a "Support Our Troops" special license plate.

Sponsors: Senators Benton, Haugen, Benson, Oke, Deccio, Schmidt, Sheldon, Weinstein, Poulsen, Roach, Pridemore, Zarelli, McAuliffe, Carrell, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Eide, Shin, Rockefeller, Delvin, Franklin and Johnson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/1/06, 2/6/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6830 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

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

Staff: Dory On (786-7321)

Background: Current law requires that vehicle license plates be attached conspicuously to the vehicle for which they are issued. Applicants for vehicle license plates who meet the specified eligibility requirements, and pay the requisite additional fees, may choose to receive special plates issued by the Department of Licensing (Department) pursuant to special license plate provisions. Beginning March 1, 2007, certain special license plates will be eligible for personalization.

Once the Department has recouped costs associated with the issuance of a special plate, the proceeds generated from the sale of a special plate are usually allocated to the nonprofit or governmental organization that sponsored the plate.

A governmental or nonprofit organization seeking to sponsor a special plate either makes application with the special license plate review board, or requests legislation to create the special plate. Until June 1, 2007, the Legislature has declared a moratorium on the issuance of new plates.

Summary of Substitute Bill: In cooperation with the Department, Support Our Troops, Inc. will create and design a special license plate displaying a symbol of a soldier and a child that may be used in lieu of standard vehicle license plates. The special plates created will honor military personnel, and will be exempt from review by the Special License Plate Review

Board (Board), the moratorium on the issuance of new plates, and the application procedures associated with Board reviewed special plates.

The "Support Our Troops" special license plate will be available beginning July 1, 2007, and will be eligible for personalization.

In addition to other registration and application fees, the Department will collect an annual fee of thirty dollars from each holder of a "Support Our Troops" license plate. Once the Department has recouped costs associated with the issuance of the "Support Our Troops" license plate, then the remaining proceeds from the sale of such plates will be deposited into a "Support Our Troops" account in the custody of the state treasurer. The director of the Department must disburse the funds in the account for the following purposes: 1) assisting the spouses and families of soldiers killed in military action; 2) providing training or assistance to soldiers injured in military action; 3) reintegrating soldiers returned from combat into society; or 4) purposes consistent with the articles of incorporation for Support Our Troops, Inc., a nonprofit organization.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The bill as referred to committee was not considered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 2006.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This is an effort by civilians to do what is morally owed to the soldiers and their families who sacrifice for and defend us all. Support Our Troops, Inc. uses existing charities to disburse the special license plate proceeds, which results in lower administrative costs and more of the funds benefitting the soldiers and their families. The organization expects to have Support Our Troops license plates on the roads in 41 states by summer.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Senator Benton, prime sponsor.