

HB 2397 - H AMD 974

By Representative Klippert

ADOPTED 03/13/2014

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "Sec. 1. RCW 46.18.230 and 2011 c 332 s 5 are each amended to read
4 as follows:

5 (1) A registered owner who has been awarded the ~~((Congressional))~~
6 Medal of Honor may apply to the department for no more than three
7 special license plate~~((s))~~ sets for use on ~~((a))~~ no more than three
8 motor vehicles required to display one or two license plates, excluding
9 vehicles registered under chapter 46.87 RCW, upon terms and conditions
10 established by the department. The ~~((Congressional))~~ Medal of Honor
11 recipient must:

12 (a) Provide proof from the Washington state department of veterans
13 affairs showing receipt of the medal; and

14 (b) Be recorded as one of the registered owners of the motor
15 vehicle on which the ~~((Congressional))~~ Medal of Honor license plate or
16 plates will be displayed.

17 (2) ~~((Congressional))~~ Medal of Honor license plates must be issued:

18 (a) ~~((Only))~~ For ~~((a))~~ no more than three personal motor vehicles
19 owned by a person~~((s))~~ who ~~((have))~~ has received the ~~((Congressional))~~
20 Medal of Honor; and

21 (b) Without payment of vehicle license fees, license plate fees,
22 and motor vehicle excise taxes.

23 (3) ~~((Congressional))~~ Medal of Honor license plates must be
24 replaced, free of charge, if the license plates become lost, stolen,
25 damaged, defaced, or destroyed.

26 (4) A ~~((Congressional))~~ Medal of Honor license plate or plates may
27 be transferred, free of charge, from one motor vehicle to another motor
28 vehicle owned by the ~~((Congressional))~~ Medal of Honor recipient upon
29 application to the department, county auditor or other agent, or
30 subagent appointed by the director.

1 (5) A registered owner who is eligible for Medal of Honor license
2 plates may, in lieu of applying for the special license plates under
3 this section, apply for regular issue license plates for no more than
4 three personal motor vehicles owned by the registered owner and receive
5 the full benefit of the vehicle license fee, license plate fee, and
6 motor vehicle excise tax exemptions provided in subsection (2)(b) of
7 this section.

8 **Sec. 2.** RCW 46.16A.200 and 2011 c 171 s 46 are each amended to
9 read as follows:

10 (1) **Design.** All license plates may be obtained by the director
11 from the metal working plant of a state correctional facility or from
12 any source in accordance with existing state of Washington purchasing
13 procedures. License plates:

14 (a) May vary in background, color, and design;

15 (b) Must be legible and clearly identifiable as a Washington state
16 license plate;

17 (c) Must designate the name of the state of Washington without
18 abbreviation;

19 (d) Must be treated with fully reflectorized materials designed to
20 increase visibility and legibility at night;

21 (e) Must be of a size and color and show the registration period as
22 determined by the director; and

23 (f) Before July 1, 2010, may display a symbol or artwork approved
24 by the former special license plate review board and the legislature.
25 Beginning July 1, 2010, special license plate series approved by the
26 department and enacted into law by the legislature may display a symbol
27 or artwork approved by the department.

28 (2) **Exceptions to reflectorized materials.** License plates issued
29 before January 1, 1968, are not required to be treated with
30 reflectorized materials.

31 (3) **Dealer license plates.** License plates issued to a dealer must
32 contain an indication that the license plates have been issued to a
33 vehicle dealer.

34 (4)(a) **Furnished.** The director shall furnish to all persons making
35 satisfactory application for a vehicle registration:

36 (i) Two identical license plates each containing the license plate
37 number; or

1 (ii) One license plate if the vehicle is a trailer, semitrailer,
2 camper, moped, collector vehicle, horseless carriage, or motorcycle.

3 (b) The director may adopt types of license plates to be used as
4 long as the license plates are legible.

5 (5)(a) **Display.** License plates must be:

6 (i) Attached conspicuously at the front and rear of each vehicle if
7 two license plates have been issued;

8 (ii) Attached to the rear of the vehicle if one license plate has
9 been issued;

10 (iii) Kept clean and be able to be plainly seen and read at all
11 times; and

12 (iv) Attached in a horizontal position at a distance of not more
13 than four feet from the ground.

14 (b) The Washington state patrol may grant exceptions to this
15 subsection if the body construction of the vehicle makes compliance
16 with this section impossible.

17 (6) **Change of license classification.** A person who has altered a
18 vehicle that makes the current license plate or plates invalid for the
19 vehicle's use shall:

20 (a) Surrender the current license plate or plates to the
21 department, county auditor or other agent, or subagent appointed by the
22 director;

23 (b) Apply for a new license plate or plates; and

24 (c) Pay a change of classification fee required under RCW
25 46.17.310.

26 (7) **Unlawful acts.** It is unlawful to:

27 (a) Display a license plate or plates on the front or rear of any
28 vehicle that were not issued by the director for the vehicle;

29 (b) Display a license plate or plates on any vehicle that have been
30 changed, altered, or disfigured, or have become illegible;

31 (c) Use holders, frames, or other materials that change, alter, or
32 make a license plate or plates illegible. License plate frames may be
33 used on license plates only if the frames do not obscure license tabs
34 or identifying letters or numbers on the plates and the license plates
35 can be plainly seen and read at all times;

36 (d) Operate a vehicle unless a valid license plate or plates are
37 attached as required under this section;

1 (e) Transfer a license plate or plates issued under this chapter
2 between two or more vehicles without first making application to
3 transfer the license plates. A violation of this subsection (7)(e) is
4 a traffic infraction subject to a fine not to exceed five hundred
5 dollars. Any law enforcement agency that determines that a license
6 plate or plates have been transferred between two or more vehicles
7 shall confiscate the license plate or plates and return them to the
8 department for nullification along with full details of the reasons for
9 confiscation. Each vehicle identified in the transfer will be issued
10 a new license plate or plates upon application by the owner or owners
11 and the payment of full fees and taxes; or

12 (f) Fail, neglect, or refuse to endorse the registration
13 certificate and deliver the license plate or plates to the purchaser or
14 transferee of the vehicle, except as authorized under this section.

15 (8) **Transfer.** (a) Standard issue license plates follow the vehicle
16 when ownership of the vehicle changes unless the registered owner
17 wishes to retain the license plates and transfer them to a replacement
18 vehicle of the same use. A registered owner wishing to keep standard
19 issue license plates shall pay the license plate transfer fee required
20 under RCW 46.17.200(1)(c) when applying for license plate transfer.

21 (b) Special license plates and personalized license plates may be
22 treated in the same manner as described in (a) of this subsection
23 unless otherwise limited by law.

24 (c) License plates issued to the state or any county, city, town,
25 school district, or other political subdivision entitled to exemption
26 as provided by law may be treated in the same manner as described in
27 (a) of this subsection.

28 (9) **Replacement.** (a) An owner or the owner's authorized
29 representative shall apply for a replacement license plate or plates if
30 the current license plate or plates assigned to the vehicle have been
31 lost, defaced, or destroyed, or if one or both plates have become so
32 illegible or are in such a condition as to be difficult to distinguish.
33 An owner or the owner's authorized representative may apply for a
34 replacement license plate or plates at any time the owner chooses.

35 (b) The application for a replacement license plate or plates must:

36 (i) Be on a form furnished or approved by the director; and

37 (ii) Be accompanied by the fee required under RCW 46.17.200(1)(a).

1 (c) The department shall not require the payment of any fee to
2 replace a license plate or plates for vehicles owned, rented, or leased
3 by foreign countries or international bodies to which the United States
4 government is a signatory by treaty.

5 (10) **Periodic replacement.** License plates must be replaced
6 periodically to ensure maximum legibility and reflectivity. The
7 department shall:

8 (a) Use empirical studies documenting the longevity of the
9 reflective materials used to make license plates;

10 (b) Determine how frequently license plates must be replaced; and

11 (c) Offer to owners the option of retaining the current license
12 plate number when obtaining replacement license plates for the fee
13 required in RCW 46.17.200(1)(b).

14 (11) **Periodic replacement--Exceptions.** The following license
15 plates are not required to be periodically replaced as required in
16 subsection (10) of this section:

17 (a) Horseless carriage license plates issued under RCW 46.18.255
18 before January 1, 1987;

19 (b) (~~Congressional~~) Medal of Honor license plates issued under
20 RCW 46.18.230;

21 (c) License plates for commercial motor vehicles with a gross
22 weight greater than twenty-six thousand pounds.

23 (12) **Rules.** The department may adopt rules to implement this
24 section.

25 (13) **Tabs or emblems.** The director may issue tabs or emblems to be
26 attached to license plates or elsewhere on the vehicle to signify
27 initial registration and renewals. Renewals become effective when tabs
28 or emblems have been issued and properly displayed on license plates.

29 **Sec. 3.** RCW 46.18.277 and 2010 c 161 s 627 are each amended to
30 read as follows:

31 (1) A registered owner may purchase personalized license plates
32 with a special license plate background for any vehicle required to
33 display one or two vehicle license plates, excluding:

34 (a) Amateur radio license plates;

35 (b) Collector vehicle license plates;

36 (c) Disabled American veteran license plates;

37 (d) Former prisoner of war license plates;

- 1 (e) Horseless carriage license plates;
2 (f) (~~Congressional~~) Medal of Honor license plates;
3 (g) Military affiliate radio system license plates;
4 (h) Pearl Harbor survivor license plates;
5 (i) Restored license plates; and
6 (j) Vehicles registered under chapter 46.87 RCW.
- 7 (2) Personalized special license plates issued under this section
8 must:
- 9 (a) Consist of numbers or letters or any combination of numbers or
10 letters;
11 (b) Not exceed seven characters; and
12 (c) Not contain less than one character.
- 13 (3) The department may not issue or may refuse to issue
14 personalized special license plates that:
- 15 (a) Duplicate or conflict with existing or projected vehicle
16 license plate series or other numbering systems for records kept by the
17 department; or
18 (b) May carry connotations offensive to good taste and decency or
19 which would be misleading.
- 20 (4) Personalized special license plates must be issued only to the
21 registered owner of the vehicle on which they are to be displayed. The
22 registered owner must:
- 23 (a) Pay both the personalized license plate fee required under RCW
24 46.17.210 and the special license plate fee required under the
25 applicable special license plate provision, in addition to any other
26 fee or taxes due. License plate fees must be distributed as provided
27 in chapter 46.68 RCW;
28 (b) Renew personalized special license plates annually, regardless
29 of whether or not the vehicle on which the personalized special license
30 plates are displayed will be driven on the public highways;
31 (c) Surrender personalized special license plates that have not
32 been renewed to the department. The failure to surrender expired
33 personalized special license plates is a traffic infraction; and
34 (d) Immediately report to the department when personalized special
35 license plates have been transferred to another vehicle or another
36 owner.
- 37 (5) The department may establish rules as necessary to carry out

1 this section including, but not limited to, identifying the maximum
2 number of positions on personalized special license plates for
3 motorcycles.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 46.04 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 "Medal of Honor" means the Medal of Honor military decoration
7 presented by the president of the United States, in the name of
8 congress."

9 Correct the title.

EFFECT: Allows the Medal of Honor special license plates to be
displayed on a vehicle where the recipient is recorded as one of the
registered owners. Allows registered owners who are eligible for the
Medal of Honor special license plates to receive the fee exemptions
associated with the Medal of Honor special license plates for regular
issue plates for no more than three motor vehicles. Defines "Medal of
Honor" as the military decoration awarded by the President of the
United States, in the name of Congress.

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