

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## EHB 2752

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**As Passed House:**  
February 17, 2014

**Title:** An act relating to Washington state tree special license plates.

**Brief Description:** Creating Washington state tree special license plates.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Walkinshaw, Clibborn, Tarleton, Riccelli, Moscoso, Ortiz-Self, Johnson and Bergquist.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 2/6/14, 2/10/14 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/17/14, 81-15.

<p><b>Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill</b></p>
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- Creates the Washington State Tree special license plate.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Fitzgibbon, Freeman, Habib, Hawkins, Kochmar, Moeller, Morris, Muri, Ortiz-Self, Pike, Riccelli, Rodne, Ryu, Sells, Takko, Tarleton, Walkinshaw and Zeiger.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hayes, Klippert, Shea and Young.

**Staff:** Paul Ingiosi (786-7114).

**Background:**

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*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.*

The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues special vehicle license plates that may be used in lieu of standard plates. A governmental or nonprofit sponsoring organization seeking to sponsor a special plate either submits an application to the DOL or requests legislation to create the special plate. The sponsoring organization seeking to sponsor the special plate is required to reimburse the DOL for the costs of establishing the new special plate. There is a moratorium on the issuance of new special plates by the DOL until July 1, 2015.

For special license plates that are enacted by the Legislature, a sponsoring organization must, within 30 days of enactment, submit prepayment of all start-up costs to the DOL. If the sponsoring organization is not able to meet the prepayment requirement, revenues generated from the sale of the special license plate are first used to pay off any costs associated with establishing the new plate. The sponsoring organization must also provide a proposed license plate design to the DOL. Additionally, the sponsoring organization must submit an annual financial report to the DOL detailing actual revenues generated from the sale of the special license plate. The reports are reviewed, approved, and presented to the Joint Transportation Committee.

The DOL collects special license plate fees and, for administrative expenses, deducts an amount not to exceed \$12 for new plate issuance and \$2 for renewal. After these expenses are paid, the State Treasurer deposits the proceeds into the Motor Vehicle Account until the DOL determines the start-up costs for a special license plate are paid.

**Summary of Engrossed Bill:**

The bill creates the Washington State Tree special license plate which would recognize the state tree. In addition to all fees and taxes required to be paid upon application for a vehicle registration, a fee of \$40 would be charged for a Washington State Tree special license plate and a \$30 fee is charged for renewal of the plate.

After the costs associated with establishing the special license plates are recovered, 85 percent of the proceeds from the sale of the special license plates will go to the Arboretum Foundation to support the Washington Park Arboretum, specifically environmental education programs for children through the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and park maintenance through the Botanic Gardens and the City of Seattle. The remaining 15 percent of the proceeds will go to the City of Spokane for maintenance of the John A. Finch Arboretum.

The bill exempts the Washington State Tree special license plate from the moratorium on new special license plates.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on January 1, 2015.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The Washington Park Arboretum, the official arboretum of the State of Washington, serves over 300,000 people per year from around the state and plays a large role statewide. The Arboretum houses one of the largest national tree collections in the country, it is the site of a Washington State University extension facility and the University of Washington research activities, and it is also the official herbarium for the Washington State Noxious Weed Board. The Arboretum Foundation raises over \$300,000 every year to give to the City of Seattle and the University of Washington for the support of the Arboretum including children's environmental education programs and maintenance. The funds from the special license plates would go to grants to support these activities.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Walkinshaw, prime sponsor; and Paige Miller, Kim Bishop, Reed Bishop, Randell Hitchin, Paul Voncks, and Shaun Corry, Arboretum Foundation.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.