

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 2752

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 27, 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: Passed House: 2/17/14, 81-15.
Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/27/14 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Eide, Co-Chair; King, Co-Chair; Hobbs, Vice Co-Chair; Fain, Budget Leadership Cabinet; Angel, Brown, Cleveland, Dansel, Ericksen, Liias, Litzow, Mullet, O'Ban and Rolfes.

Staff: Amanda Cecil (786-7429)

Background: The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues special vehicle license plates that may be used in lieu of standard plates. A governmental or nonprofit organization seeking to sponsor a special plate either submits an application to DOL or requests legislation to create the special plate.

Revenues generated from the sale of a special license plate are first used to reimburse the motor vehicle account for any costs associated with establishing the new plate. After DOL determines that the state has been reimbursed for the cost of implementing the new plate, the remaining revenues are directed to various accounts and uses prescribed by the specific plate. DOL may also deduct up to \$12 for an original issue and \$2 for the renewal of a special plate to cover administration and collection expenses.

There is a moratorium on the issuance of new special license plates until July 1, 2015.

Summary of Bill: The State Tree special license plate, displaying the state tree, is created. In addition to all fees and taxes required to be paid upon application for a vehicle

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registration, a fee of \$40 is charged for a State Tree special license plate and a \$30 fee is charged annually at registration renewal.

After DOL determines that the state has been reimbursed for the costs associated with establishing the special license, proceeds from the sale of the State Tree special license plates are used as follows:

- Eighty-five percent to the Washington Park Arboretum to support the University of Washington Botanic Gardens' environmental education programs for children at the Washington Park Arboretum, and to the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and the city of Seattle for maintenance of the Washington Park Arboretum.
- Fifteen percent to the city of Spokane for maintenance of the John A. Finch Arboretum.

The State Tree special license plate is exempt from the temporary moratorium on special license plates.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The western hemlock was identified as the state tree in 1947 over the red cedar because of its contributions to the timber industry. This will benefit the state arboretum in Seattle as well as an arboretum in Spokane.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Walkinshaw, prime sponsor.