
Transportation Committee

HB 2139

Brief Description: Creating Remembers license plates.

Sponsors: Representatives Young, Shea, Barkis and McCaslin.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Remembers special license plate.
- Establishes original and renewal fees for the special license plate.
- Provides funds to the Department of Veterans Affairs to maintain the Washington Veterans Home Cemetery and the Washington Soldiers Home Cemetery.

Hearing Date: 2/10/20

Staff: Christine Thomas (786-7142).

Background:

Special License Plates.

The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues special vehicle license plates that may be used in lieu of standard plates. An organization seeking to sponsor a special license plate must be a nonprofit organization, a professional sports franchise working in conjunction with a nonprofit organization, or a government agency. The sponsoring organization may choose one of two ways of creating a special license plate.

Application Process and Legislation. In this method, a sponsoring organization submits an application to the DOL prior to pursuing legislation. The application packet must include the design of the special license plate, proof of 3,500 signatures in support of the special license plate, and the start-up fee of \$6,300. After the DOL approves the application, the sponsoring organization must pursue legislation to create the special license plate.

Legislation Without the Department of Licensing's Review. In this method, a sponsoring organization pursues legislation without applying to the DOL first. Once the bill is enacted, the

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sponsoring organization must provide the design of the special license plate and the start-up fee of \$6,300 to the DOL within 30 days.

In both methods, if the sponsoring organization can prove that they are unable to provide the start-up fee up front, then revenues from the sale of the special license plate will be used to pay this fee. On an annual basis, the sponsoring organization must submit a financial report to the DOL detailing actual revenues from the sale of the special license plate. The DOL compiles these reports and presents them to the transportation committees of the Legislature.

The DOL collects special license plate fees and, for administrative expenses, retains an amount not to exceed \$12 for new plate issuance and \$2 for renewal of the plate. The State Treasurer then deposits the remaining proceeds into the Motor Vehicle Account until the DOL determines that the start-up fee of \$6,300 is paid. Once the start-up fee is paid, the State Treasurer credits the remaining special license plate proceeds into an account specified for the sponsoring organization.

Washington Veterans Cemeteries.

The Washington Veterans Home Cemetery is located in Retsil, Washington, where more than 2,700 veterans and their spouses are interred. Land was purchased in 1914 east of the Washington Veterans Home that opened in 1910. A portion of the land was cleared and fenced for a new cemetery. Additional land for the cemetery was purchased in 1935. The eastern, or old, part of the cemetery was set aside for veterans and spouses of the Civil War while the western area was dedicated for the veterans and spouses of World War 1.

The Washington Soldiers Home in Orting, Washington, opened in June of 1891. A cemetery was built along with the Soldiers Home for veterans and their spouses. Land for the Soldiers Home Cemetery was purchased in 1907 to relocate the cemetery due to flooding at the old site. More than 2,200 veterans and their spouses are interred at Washington Soldiers Home Cemetery.

Summary of Bill:

The Remembers special license plate is created with the purpose of providing funds to the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). In addition to all fees and taxes required to be paid upon application for a vehicle registration, a fee of \$40 is charged for the original issuance of a Remembers special license plate, and a \$30 fee is charged for the renewal of the plate. The revenue from the fees collected for the special license plates will provide funds to the Veterans Stewardship Account for the DVA to maintain the Washington Veterans Home Cemetery and the Washington Soldiers Home Cemetery.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on October 1, 2019.