

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6280

As of February 1, 2024

Title: An act relating to parking privileges for veterans.

Brief Description: Providing for veteran parking privileges.

Sponsors: Senators Braun, Boehnke, Dozier, Holy, Lovick, Schoesler, Torres, Warnick, Wilson, J. and Wilson, L..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/01/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes veterans with a certain disability rating who own a qualifying service dog to apply for special parking privileges.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Brandon Popovac (786-7465)

Background: A person with a disability who meets at least one of the following conditions, as determined by a licensed physician, advanced nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, may apply for special parking privileges to the Department of Licensing (DOL):

- cannot walk 200 feet without stopping to rest;
- is severely limited in ability to walk due to arthritic, neurological, or orthopedic condition;
- has such a severe disability that the person cannot walk without the use of or assistance from a brace, cane, another person, or certain assistive devices;
- uses portable oxygen;
- is restricted by lung disease to a certain extent;
- impairment by cardiovascular disease or cardiac condition to a certain extent;
- has a disability resulting from an acute sensitivity to automobile emissions that limits

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- or impairs the ability to walk and the disability is comparable to other qualifying disabilities;
- has limited mobility and no vision or whose vision with corrective lenses is extremely limited;
- has an eye condition of a progressive nature that may lead to blindness; or
- is restricted by a form of porphyria to the extent that the applicant would significantly benefit from a decrease in exposure to light.

If a person is granted a special parking privilege, DOL must provide the person, at no cost, with special license plates or parking placards, or both, containing the international symbol of access and an identification card.

A person with a qualifying disability that is expected to improve within 12 months may only be issued a temporary placard for a period that does not exceed 12 months. After 12 months, if the qualifying disability is still present, a new application with health care certification must be submitted. Special parking privileges for individuals with disabilities must be renewed at least every five years, with signed written authorization from a health care practitioner provided in the renewal application.

Authorization from a health care professional with authority to write prescriptions must be provided to DOL on a tamper-resistant prescription pad or paper. If the health care professional does not have authority to write prescriptions, the authorization must be made on office letterhead. These authorizations must be attached to the application for special parking privileges for persons with disabilities.

Disability ratings for veterans are based on the severity of their service-connected disability or disabilities, which is expressed as a percentage reflecting how much the disability or disabilities decrease overall health and ability to function. The disability rating is determined in 10 percent increments and informs the disability compensation rate.

Summary of Bill: A veteran who satisfies the following criteria may apply for special parking privileges:

- has been rated by Veterans Affairs and is receiving service connected compensation at a rate of at least 70 percent;
- owns a service dog endorsed by a dog training entity that is approved by the Internal Revenue Service; and
- has a written determination from a health care practitioner supporting the condition the service dog is claimed to serve.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Veterans with visible and nonvisible disabilities often use a service dog to help deal with daily challenges. Service dogs are lifelines for veterans with disabilities. The bill ensures special parking permits are given to those who need them. Many veterans struggle with getting service dogs in and out of cars in normal parking spaces. Parking pavement heat is an issue for service dogs. Improving access to better parking will prevent potential injury to service dogs and encourage veterans to be more publicly active and return to normalcy. Having to navigate tight parking spots may give service dogs further anxiety, distracting them from their service duties.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator John Braun, Prime Sponsor; Scott Bigger, K9kavalry; Dan Register, K9 Kavalry 501(c)3; Holly Mehlenbeck; William ramonas.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.