

**SFA**



BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Fiscal Agency

Lansing, Michigan 48909

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House Bill 4170 (Substitute H-1 as reported with amendment)  
House Bill 4171 (Substitute H-1 as reported with amendment)  
House Bill 4172 (Substitute H-1 as reported with amendment)  
House Bill 4173 (Substitute H-1 as reported with amendment)  
Sponsor: Representative Robert DeMars  
House Committee: Military and Veterans' Affairs  
Senate Committee: Local Government and Veterans

Date Completed: 4-24-89

### RATIONALE

Since 1982, Michigan has honored United States veterans who are former prisoners of war by allowing them to obtain specially inscribed license plates. Public Acts 148 and 150 of 1988 made specially inscribed plates available to recipients of the Purple Heart Medal and survivors of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and veterans of World War I, respectively. Some people believe that veterans of other wars as well as members and former members of the National Guard should be honored for their service to this country. It has been proposed that special plates be made available to veterans of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, as well as current and former members of the National Guard.

### CONTENT

The bills would amend the Vehicle Code to provide for the issuance of specially designed registration plates for certain veterans of the armed services as well as members and veterans of the National Guard; require an applicant for a plate to prove that he or she was a veteran or National Guard member; provide for the payment of a service fee; provide for the expiration of a special plate and for renewal of that plate; and, establish penalties. The bills would take effect November 11, 1989.

Under the bills, a person who was a member of the armed services during either World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, or who was a veteran or member of the National Guard could apply to the Secretary of State for a special registration plate that would display an appropriate vignette preceding the registration numbers with certain designations, as specified in the bills, inscribed beneath the registration numbers.

House Bill 4170 (H-1) would allow World War II veterans, House Bill 4171 (H-1) would allow Korean War veterans, House Bill 4172 (H-1) would allow Vietnam War veterans, and House Bill 4173 (H-1) would allow veterans and members of the National Guard to apply for special registration plate.

All the bills would require that application for a special registration plate be on a form prescribed by the Secretary of State, and be accompanied by any proof of the applicant's having been a veteran or of the applicant's being or having been a National Guard member, which the Secretary of State could require. The application would have to be accompanied by payment of a \$5 service fee.

Upon proper application and payment of the service fee, the Secretary of State would be required to issue one or more special registration plates for each applicant for use on

a passenger vehicle. A handicapped person who applied for a special registration plate and paid the \$5 service fee would have to be issued a handicapper tab, as provided in the Code (MCL 257.803f), for his or her special registration plate. The Secretary of State would have to require the same proof that the applicant was a handicapper as the Code requires for issuance of a permanent certificate of identification (MCL 257.675). A person issued one or more special registration plates would have to be assessed the applicable tax at the time of registration, as provided in the Code (MCL 257.801).

It would be a misdemeanor to use a special registration plate on a vehicle other than the vehicle for which the plate was issued, or if a person did not qualify under the bills' provisions.

The special registration plate would expire on the vehicle owner's birthday. When new plates were issued by the Secretary of State, the renewal application would have to be accompanied by a \$5 service fee, but the applicant would not have to provide proof of being a veteran of the armed services or member or veteran of the National Guard.

Proposed MCL 257.803l (House Bill 4170)  
257.803j (House Bill 4171)  
257.803k (House Bill 4172)  
257.803i (House Bill 4173)

### SENATE COMMITTEE ACTION

The Local Government and Veterans Committee adopted amendments to each bill that would require the registration plate to display an appropriate vignette, which would depict the appropriate war or status as a National Guard member or veteran, preceding the registration numbers. The plate also would have to have the word "veteran" or "National Guard" inscribed beneath the registration numbers.

### FISCAL IMPACT

The Department of State anticipates that fees collected under the bills would cover the costs of issuing the appropriate vignette. According to the "Amvets" service organization, the total number of war veterans who would be affected

by the bills are as follows:

WWII . . . . .	335,000
Korean War . . . . .	170,700
Vietnam War . . . . .	794,300
National Guard . . . . .	20,000*
TOTAL . . . . .	1,320,000

\* This figure includes active and retired members.

### ARGUMENTS

#### Supporting Argument

The bills would give veterans and National Guard members the same honor and recognition that the State now gives former prisoners of war, Pearl Harbor survivors, Purple Heart recipients, and World War I veterans. These plates would serve as a means of honoring the individual and reminding the public of the services rendered and hardships endured by that person.

#### Supporting Argument

The amendments to the bills would require that a vignette be displayed on the plate rather than the plate's being inscribed with special identification numbers and words designating the plate holder as a veteran of a particular war or of being or having been a National Guard member, as the House-passed version of the bills would have required. This would allow the Secretary of State to issue special decals for each plate and would help reduce the costs for producing the plates, keeping them within the \$5 service fee.

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.