



Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

BILL ANALYSIS



Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986

Senate Bill 268 (Substitute S-2 as reported)
Sponsor: Senator Vincent Gregory
Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 3-21-18

RATIONALE

The Michigan Vehicle Code permits a special registration plate to be issued to a totally disabled veteran; a member of the National Guard, military reserve, or armed services; and a veteran of the armed forces, or the spouse of a veteran, who served during World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War, or Persian Gulf War, or a conflict specified in the Code. A person applying for a special plate must pay a \$5 fee in addition to the standard registration tax. According to the Michigan Department of State, 4,762 veteran plates were sold in 2016 (which generated \$53,500), and 4,648 plates were sold in 2017 (which generated \$51,200). Although military veterans are recognized for their contributions and sacrifices through special registration plates, some have pointed out that women make up a sizeable portion of the United States military and its veteran population and do not have a plate recognizing their service. In an effort to honor women veterans, it has been suggested that a special registration plate be made available to them.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to do the following:

- **Provide for the availability of "woman veteran" special registration plates.**
- **Require a plate application to include proof that the applicant, or his or her spouse, was a veteran, as required by the Secretary of State (SOS).**
- **Require the application for the special registration plate, and any renewal application, to be accompanied by a \$5 service fee.**
- **Specify that the use of the special registration plate on a vehicle other than the vehicle for which the plate was issued, or by a person who did not qualify under the bill, would be a misdemeanor.**

Specifically, the bill would allow a veteran or his or her spouse to apply to the SOS for a special registration plate that would have to display an appropriate vignette and the words "woman veteran" preceding the registration number and the word "veteran" beneath the registration number.

Application for a special registration plate would have to be on a form prescribed by the SOS, and would have to be accompanied by any proof that the applicant or the applicant's spouse was a veteran that the SOS required. Also, payment of a \$5 service fee would have to accompany the application.

Upon proper application and payment of the \$5 fee, the SOS would have to issue one or more special registration plates for each applicant for use on a passenger vehicle. A person who was disabled who applied for the special registration plate and who paid the service fee would have to be issued a tab for people with disabilities as provided in the Code for his or her special registration plate. The SOS would have to require the same proof that the applicant was a disabled person as required for issuance of a permanent windshield placard under the Code. A person issued one or

more special registration plates would have to be assessed the applicable registration tax found in the Code.

The special registration plate would expire on the birthday of the vehicle owner. When the SOS issued new plates, application for renewal of the special registration plate would have to be accompanied by a \$5 service fee. The applicant would not be required to furnish the proof described above.

The bill would take effect on August 1, 2019.

Proposed MCL 257.803s

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

Numerous women serve and have served in the United States military. According to Senate Transportation Committee testimony, women make up approximately 15% of all active duty forces and over 20% of new recruits. The current Michigan women veteran population is estimated to be around 45,000.

Many women veterans face various challenges once they return to civilian life, such as receiving appropriate health care, housing, education and job opportunities, and benefits. In addition, women veterans often are not given the recognition they deserve. The State has a number of special recognition plates for veterans already, but lacks a plate specific to honoring the sacrifices women have made while serving in the military. Creating this plate would highlight and honor their achievements and contributions, and would serve as another small step toward taking care of those who have served in a branch of the United States Armed Forces.

Legislative Analyst: Drew Krogulecki

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the Department of State. The Department has indicated that the bill would create costs associated with the manufacture of the proposed registration plate, development and printing of new application forms, and programming costs to include the new plate in the Secretary of State's system. The Department's annual appropriations should be able to absorb these costs; however, any costs beyond those that could be absorbed would require additional appropriations.

Fiscal Analyst: Joe Carrasco

SASVA1718\ls268a

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.