

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1128
By: Fletcher
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Current law provides for the issuance of specialty license plates to recipients of various military awards and medals for the recipient to display the recipient's achievements. Interested parties note that recipients of the Combat Action Badge, Combat Action Medal, and Combat Action Ribbon are not currently eligible to receive such a license plate. C.S.H.B. 1128 seeks to recognize these soldiers whose personal engagement with the enemy during combat operations resulted in the soldier's receipt of one of these awards.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1128 amends the Transportation Code to require the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Combat Action Badge, the Combat Action Medal, and the Combat Action Ribbon. The bill requires the license plates to include the Combat Action Badge Combat Infantryman emblem, the Combat Action Medal emblem, or the Combat Action Ribbon emblem, as applicable, and to include the words "Combat Action Badge," "Combat Action Medal," or "Combat Action Ribbon," as applicable, at the bottom of each plate. The bill includes those emblems among the emblems that a person entitled to specialty license plates for veterans with disabilities may request for inclusion on the person's license plates. The bill requires TxDMV, if a branch of the U.S. armed forces awards a Combat Action Badge or Ribbon with a unique emblem for each award of the Combat Action Badge or Ribbon to a recipient, to only issue specialty license plates that include the unique emblem of the first award.

EFFECTIVE DATE

January 1, 2016.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1128 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Section 504.202(e-1), Transportation Code, is amended.

SECTION 2. Subchapter D, Chapter 504, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 504.320 to read as follows:

Sec. 504.320. COMBAT ACTION BADGE RECIPIENTS. The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Combat Action Badge. License plates issued under this section must include the Combat Action Badge emblem and must include the words "Combat Action Badge" at the bottom of each plate.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 2. Subchapter D, Chapter 504, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 504.320 to read as follows:

Sec. 504.320. COMBAT ACTION BADGE, MEDAL, OR RIBBON RECIPIENTS. (a) The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Combat Action Badge. License plates issued under this subsection must include the Combat Action Badge **Combat Infantryman** emblem and must include the words "Combat Action Badge" at the bottom of each plate.

(b) The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Combat Action Medal. License plates issued under this subsection must include the Combat Action Medal emblem and must include the words "Combat Action Medal" at the bottom of each plate.

(c) The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Combat Action Ribbon. License plates issued under this subsection must include the Combat Action Ribbon emblem and must include the words "Combat Action Ribbon" at the bottom of each plate.

(d) For purposes of Subsections (a) and (c), if a branch of the United States armed forces awards a Combat Action Badge or Ribbon with a unique emblem for each award of the Combat Action Badge or Ribbon to a recipient, the department shall only issue specialty license plates that include the unique emblem of the first award.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect **January 1, 2016.**