

SUBJECT: Issuing disabled parking placards to certain veterans with disabilities

COMMITTEE: Defense Affairs and State-Federal Relations — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 7 ayes — Corte, Escobar, Noriega, Garcia, Hodge, Merritt, Raymond
0 nays
2 absent — Herrero, Moreno

WITNESSES: For — None
Against — None
On — Mike Craig, Texas Department of Transportation

BACKGROUND: Transportation Code, ch. 504 governs specialty license plates for Texas vehicles. Sec. 504.202 authorizes veterans with disabilities to register two vehicles with specialty disabled veteran license plates and sets the guidelines for eligibility.

Transportation Code, ch. 681 governs privileged parking and the issuance of disabled parking placards. Sec. 681.004 stipulates that a person who receives a set of specialty disabled veteran license plates may receive one disabled parking placard. A person who does not receive specialty disabled veteran license plates may receive two disabled parking placards.

DIGEST: HB 2105 would amend secs. 504.202 and 681.004(a) to authorize a veteran with disabilities who received two sets of disabled veterans license plates to be issued two disabled parking placards.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2007.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 2105 would simplify a confusing process for disabled veterans and clarify that certain disabled veterans who drive multiple vehicles could obtain two disabled parking placards. Even though the placards are

transferable from one to car to another, some veterans find it difficult to transfer the placard due to limited mobility or other disabilities.

By making it easier for disabled veterans to display a disabled parking placard in more than one car, the bill would give them more parking options in certain situations. For example, there are some disabled parking spots in Texas that allow “blue placard only” parking, in which case a veteran who did not have a placard would be out of luck even if in a car displaying disabled veteran parking plates.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

Currently, veterans must complete two different processes that rely on the same supporting documentation to obtain specialty plates and disabled placards. The bill also should allow “one-stop shopping,” whereby a veteran could complete one application process to obtain the plates and placards.