

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 559
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Transportation & Homeland Security
5/6/2011
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current law provides for specialty license plates to be issued for Purple Heart recipients and Distinguished Flying Cross medal recipients. Bronze Star Medal recipients are considered to have demonstrated extraordinary service in the performance of exceptionally meritorious conduct and achievement.

Such service may warrant recognition in the form of a specialty license plate similar to those provided to Purple Heart recipients and Distinguished Flying Cross medal recipients. However, Bronze Star Medal recipients are not included in the provisions regarding military specialty license plates for extraordinary service.

H.B. 559 recognizes the exemplary service of Bronze Star Medal recipients by providing for the issuance of specialty license plates and other benefits.

H.B. 559 amends current law relating to Bronze Star Medal and Bronze Star Medal with Valor specialty license plates.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 504.315, Transportation Code, by adding Subsection (a), as follows:

(a) Requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Bronze Star Medal and Bronze Star Medal with Valor. Requires that license plates issued under this subsection include the Bronze Star Medal emblem and include the words "Bronze Star Medal" at the bottom of each plate. Requires that license plates issued under this subsection to recipients of the Bronze Star Medal with Valor that are not personalized also include the letter "V" as a prefix or suffix to the numerals on each plate. Provides that Section 504.702 (Specialty License Plates Authorized After January 1, 1999) does not apply to license plates authorized by this subsection.

SECTION 2. Reenacts Section 681.008(b), Transportation Code, as amended by Chapters 115 (H.B. 2020) and 319 (H.B. 618), Acts of the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, 2009, and amends it as follows:

(b) Provides that a vehicle on which license plates described by Subsection (a)(2) (relating to parking in certain areas by a vehicle that indicates that the owner or operator is a disabled veteran of the United States armed forces) or issued under Section 504.202 (Veterans with Disabilities), Section 504.315(a), (c) (relating to specialty license plates for a person who was captured and incarcerated by an enemy of the United States during a period of conflict), (d) (relating to specialty license plates for survivors of the attack on Pearl Harbor), (e) (relating to specialty license plates for a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor), (f) (relating to specialty license plates for recipients of certain awards),

or (g) (relating to specialty license plates for recipients of the Purple Heart), or Section 504.316 (Legion of Merit Medal Recipients) are displayed is exempt from the payment of a parking fee collected through a parking meter charged by a governmental authority other than a branch of the federal government, when being operated by or for the transportation of:

- (1) the person who registered the vehicle under Section 504.202(a) (relating to payment of certain fees for specialty license plates), Section 504.315(a), (c), (d), (e), (f), or (g), or Section 504.316;
- (2) a person described in Section 504.202(b) (relating to certain persons entitled to register for specialty license plates under this section) if the vehicle is registered under that subsection; or
- (3) the owner or operator of a vehicle displaying license plates described by Subsection (a)(2).

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2011.