

2012 -- H 7101

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LC00277  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES - REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES

Introduced By: Representatives Gallison, Fellela, Messier, Azzinaro, and McLaughlin

Date Introduced: January 11, 2012

Referred To: House Veterans` Affairs

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 31-3-53 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-3 entitled "Registration  
2 of Vehicles" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-3-53. Veterans' plates.** -- (a) The registrar of motor vehicles shall issue for any motor  
4 vehicle eligible for registration as an automobile, or for any motorcycle eligible for registration as  
5 a motorcycle, or for a commercial vehicle having a gross weight of ten thousand one pounds  
6 (10,001 lbs.) or less, plates designated as "Veteran", "Purple Heart", and "Ex-POW" upon  
7 application on proper forms furnished by the administrator of the division of motor vehicles to  
8 veterans. Gold Star parents shall also be eligible for plates designated as "Veteran".

9 (b) The special plate designated "Veteran" shall be designed as follows;

10 (1) Letters and numbers shall be blue in a white background with the words "Rhode  
11 Island" clearly visible at the top center of the plate and the word "Veteran" visible at the bottom  
12 center of the plate.

13 (2) The background will be a red, white and blue waving American Flag.

14 (3) On the top right corner will be a decal with the military branch of the service in  
15 which the Veteran served (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and  
16 Gold Star Parent).

17 (4) For war veterans a white decal with blue letters with the words "War Veteran" placed  
18 under the military branch decal on the right side of the plate above the validation sticker.

19 (c) The applicant shall be required to pay a service charge of twenty dollars (\$20.00) and

1 a transfer charge of five dollars (\$5.00) for each plate.

2 (d) The applicant shall be entitled to a plate for each vehicle owned by the applicant  
3 upon payment of an additional service charge and/or transfer charge for each vehicle.

4 (e) The owner of a motor vehicle eligible for registration as a commercial vehicle and  
5 having a gross weight of ten thousand one pounds (10,001 lbs.) or less that is issued veteran  
6 plates shall continue to pay the appropriate commercial registration fee for those plates. The  
7 owner of a motor vehicle eligible for registration as a commercial vehicle having a gross weight  
8 of six thousand three hundred pounds (6,300 lbs.) but not more than ten thousand one pounds  
9 (10,001 lbs.) shall sign an affidavit at the time of application for said plates stating that the  
10 vehicle is to be used for personal use only.

11 (f) (1) For the purposes of this section, a "veteran" shall be defined as any person who  
12 has served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States. The term "veteran" shall also  
13 include members of the National Guard and Reserves: (i) called to active duty authorized by the  
14 President of the United States or the Secretary of Defense; or (ii) who have twenty (20) years of  
15 service with a letter and record of separation of service.

16 (2) For the purposes of this section "War Veteran" shall be defined as any veteran of any  
17 conflict or undeclared war who has earned a campaign ribbon or expeditionary medal for service  
18 in either a declared or undeclared war as noted on the war veteran's DD-214. Upon the death of  
19 the holder of any veteran plates, the plates shall be transferred to the surviving spouse for the  
20 spouse's lifetime until he or she remarries.

21 (g) The "veteran" or "war veteran" described in subdivisions (f)(1)(i) or (ii) and (2) must  
22 have been honorably discharged from the armed forces of this nation in order to receive plates  
23 pursuant to this section and, for purposes of this section, a medical discharge or a general  
24 discharge shall be deemed an honorable discharge.

25 (h) For the purpose of this section, "Gold Star Parent" means a person who has lost a son  
26 or a daughter as a result of service with the armed forces of the United States of America;  
27 provided, the death was determined to be in the line of duty.

28 (i) Veterans who have served in multiple conflicts are entitled to be issued, veterans'  
29 plates equal to the number of conflicts he or she served in; provided, the plates are limited to the  
30 number of vehicles owned by the veteran.

31 (j) A person shall be eligible for a veterans' plate if his or her deceased spouse was  
32 eligible for a veterans' plate, notwithstanding the fact that the eligible deceased spouse died prior  
33 to the enactment of this section in 1988.

34 [\(k\) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the exchange or cancellation of](#)

1 [previously issued plates designated "war veteran".](#)

2 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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- 1 This act would allow a veteran to retain any previously issued war veteran license plate.
- 2 This act would take effect upon passage.

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