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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- VETERAN COURTESY
REGISTRATION PLATE

Introduced By: Senators Walaska, Felag, Lombardi, Lombardo, and McCaffrey

Date Introduced: February 11, 2015

Referred To: Senate Special Legislation and 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 twelve thousand pounds
6 (12,000 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"
18 placed under the military branch decal on the right side of the plate above the validation sticker.

1 (c) The applicant shall be required to pay a service charge of twenty dollars (\$20.00) and
2 a transfer charge of five dollars (\$5.00) for each plate.

3 [\(1\) The plate designed as a "veteran" plate shall be available as a courtesy plate under the](#)
4 [terms, conditions, charges and fees provided for in § 31-3-17.1.](#)

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

7 (e) The owner of a motor vehicle eligible for registration as a commercial vehicle and
8 having a gross weight of twelve thousand pounds (12,000 lbs.) or less who is issued veteran
9 plates shall continue to pay the appropriate commercial registration fee for those plates. The
10 owner of a motor vehicle eligible for registration as a commercial vehicle having a gross weight
11 of six thousand three hundred pounds (6,300 lbs.) but not more than twelve thousand pounds
12 (12,000 lbs.) shall sign an affidavit at the time of application for said plates stating that the
13 vehicle is to be used for personal use only.

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

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

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

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

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

34 (j) A person shall be eligible for a veterans' plate if his or her deceased spouse was

1 eligible for a veterans' plate, notwithstanding the fact that the eligible, deceased spouse died prior
2 to the enactment of this section in 1988.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- VETERAN COURTESY
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- 1 This act would permit a courtesy or vanity plate to be issued as a "veteran" plate under
- 2 the terms and conditions regarding the issuance of courtesy plates.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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