



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 40

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 5787

House of Representatives, March 5, 2025

The Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs reported through REP. FOSTER of the 57th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING REIMBURSEMENT FOR VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO JOIN A CHAPTER OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART AND RECEIVE A NUMBER PLATE RECOGNIZING THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 14-19a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

3 (a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall adopt regulations in
4 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 to establish (1) standards
5 for the issuance of a special certificate of registration and special number
6 plates to a member of an organization which qualifies for issuance, (2)
7 qualifications of organizations whose members wish to apply for such
8 special registrations, (3) procedures for application for such special
9 registration, and (4) a fee for such special number plates which shall
10 cover at least the entire cost of making the plates and which shall be in
11 addition to the fee for registration of the motor vehicle. The regulations

12 shall provide that a labor union shall be a qualifying organization.

13 (b) The Department of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the Board
14 of Regents for Higher Education, shall adopt regulations, in accordance
15 with the provisions of chapter 54, to establish standards for the issuance
16 and renewal of collegiate special number plates with the logos or
17 emblems of Connecticut public and independent institutions of higher
18 education.

19 (c) On or after July 1, 2004, the commissioner may issue special
20 certificates of registration and special number plates in accordance with
21 the regulations adopted under subsection (a) of this section provided
22 the commissioner may not issue a set of special number plates bearing
23 the same numerals as any other plate issued by the department. The
24 commissioner may discontinue the issuance of any such special number
25 plates issued for a qualified organization, or special plates issued in
26 accordance with the provisions of sections 14-19b and 14-21f to 14-21p,
27 inclusive, at any time, upon written notice to the organization if, in the
28 opinion of the commissioner, the demand for such plates is insufficient
29 to support the costs of production.

30 (d) Any veteran or member of the armed forces, as those terms are
31 defined in section 27-103, who is issued, on or after July 1, 2025, a
32 number plate recognizing the Military Order of the Purple Heart
33 pursuant to any regulation adopted under subsection (a) of this section,
34 and who paid a charge to join as a member of a chapter of the Military
35 Order of the Purple Heart in order to obtain such number plate, may
36 apply to the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, in a form and a manner
37 prescribed by said commissioner, for reimbursement of such
38 membership charge from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Not later
39 than sixty days after receipt of any such application, said commissioner
40 shall notify such veteran or member of the armed forces of a decision on
41 such application and, if approved, provide such reimbursement.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	July 1, 2025	14-19a
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Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

The title was changed.

VA *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Vet. Affairs, Dept.	GF - Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill would result in a cost to the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) beginning in FY 26 to the extent that eligible veterans and members of the armed services are approved for a number plate recognizing the Military Order of the Purple Heart. The bill requires the DVA to reimburse approved applicants their membership fee to join the Order, which currently is \$200 for a lifetime membership.

The impact of the bill is dependent on the number of eligible veterans and members of the armed forces that are eligible in the future.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the cost of membership to the Military Order of the Purple Heart and the number of eligible veterans.

OLR Bill Analysis**HB 5787*****AN ACT CONCERNING REIMBURSEMENT FOR VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO JOIN A CHAPTER OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART AND RECEIVE A NUMBER PLATE RECOGNIZING THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART.*****SUMMARY**

This bill allows veterans and members of the armed forces who get a license plate recognizing the Military Order of the Purple Heart on or after July 1, 2025, to apply to the veterans affairs commissioner for reimbursement of the cost of joining a chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart in order to get the license plate.

The bill (1) authorizes the commissioner to determine the application process for reimbursement and (2) requires him to notify the veteran or member of a decision within 60 days of receipt of the application and, if approved, reimburse the veteran or member.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

BACKGROUND***Definition of Armed Forces***

“Armed forces” means the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force, Space Force, and any reserve component of them, including the Connecticut National Guard performing duty under federal law (CGS § 27-103).

Definition of Veteran

Under state law, a veteran is anyone who was honorably discharged, or released under honorable conditions, from active service in the United States armed forces. This also includes anyone who was released from active service with an other than honorable (OTH) discharge based

on a “qualifying condition.”

A qualifying condition is a (1) post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury diagnosis by a licensed health care professional at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facility; (2) military sexual trauma disclosed to such a health care professional; or (3) determination by the Qualifying Review Board that sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for the OTH discharge (CGS § 27-103).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 20 Nay 0 (02/18/2025)