



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 303**

January Session, 2025

House Bill No. 6734

*House of Representatives, March 27, 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 bill ought to pass.

**AN ACT REDUCING FOR VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES THE FEE FOR CERTAIN SPECIALTY MOTOR VEHICLE NUMBER PLATES TO NOT MORE THAN THE COST TO MAKE SUCH PLATES.**

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

1 Section 1. Section 14-20b of the general statutes is repealed and the  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, at the request of any veteran  
4 or member of the armed forces or the surviving spouse of such veteran  
5 or member, shall register any motor vehicle owned or leased for a period  
6 of at least one year by such person and shall issue a special certificate of  
7 registration and a set of number plates for each such motor vehicle,  
8 including a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates  
9 for any motor vehicle used exclusively for farming purposes by any  
10 such veteran or member of the armed forces, or the surviving spouse of  
11 such veteran or member, who is engaged in agricultural production as  
12 a trade or business. The plates shall expire and be renewed as provided  
13 in section 14-22. The commissioner shall charge a fee for such plates,  
14 which fee shall [cover] be not more than the entire cost of making such

15 plates and shall be in addition to the fee for registration of such motor  
16 vehicle. The commissioner shall charge a fee of fifteen dollars to replace  
17 such plates that become mutilated or illegible. Any such member of the  
18 armed forces who is dishonorably discharged shall return such plates to  
19 the commissioner not later than thirty days after such discharge. The  
20 commissioner shall not renew such plates for any motor vehicle owned  
21 or leased by any such member of the armed forces who is dishonorably  
22 discharged.

23 (b) (1) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, at the request of any  
24 person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units,  
25 which units served in the United States secret war in the Kingdom of  
26 Laos during the Vietnam War, or any person who is an eligible former  
27 reservist, or the surviving spouse of any such person, and after  
28 verification from the Department of Veterans Affairs as provided under  
29 subdivision (2) or (3), as applicable, of this subsection, shall register any  
30 motor vehicle owned or leased for a period of at least one year by such  
31 person and shall issue a special certificate of registration and a set of  
32 number plates for each such motor vehicle, including a special certificate  
33 of registration and a set of number plates for any motor vehicle used  
34 exclusively for farming purposes by any such person, or the surviving  
35 spouse of such person, who is engaged in agricultural production as a  
36 trade or business. The plates shall expire and be renewed as provided  
37 in section 14-22. The commissioner shall charge a fee for such plates,  
38 which fee shall [cover] be not more than the entire cost of making such  
39 plates and shall be in addition to the fee for registration of such motor  
40 vehicle.

41 (2) Any person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian special  
42 guerilla units, or the surviving spouse of such person, may submit a  
43 request to the Department of Veterans Affairs to be listed as a veteran,  
44 based on such person's service during the Vietnam War, for the purpose  
45 of obtaining a special certificate of registration and a set of number  
46 plates under subdivision (1) of this subsection. Such person, or the  
47 surviving spouse of such person, shall provide to said department (A)  
48 an affidavit stating (i) when such person served, (ii) where such person

49 served, (iii) the unit in which such person served, and (iv) the capacity  
50 in which such person served; (B) any available corroborating witness  
51 affidavits; (C) any available official documentation of service; and (D)  
52 any other documents supporting such person's or such surviving  
53 spouse's affidavit. Said department shall, not later than thirty days after  
54 receipt of such request, verify whether such person was a member of the  
55 Hmong Laotian special guerilla units and, if so verified, notify the  
56 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of such request and verification.

57 (3) (A) Any person who is an eligible former reservist, or the  
58 surviving spouse of such person, may submit a request to the  
59 Department of Veterans Affairs to be listed as a veteran, based on such  
60 person's service in a reserve component of the armed forces, for the  
61 purpose of obtaining a special certificate of registration and a set of  
62 number plates under subdivision (1) of this subsection. Such person, or  
63 the surviving spouse of such person, shall provide to said department  
64 all available official documentation of such service. Said department  
65 shall, not later than thirty days after receipt of such request, verify such  
66 person's service and, if so verified, notify the Commissioner of Motor  
67 Vehicles of such request and verification.

68 (B) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (1) of this  
69 subsection or subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, neither the issuance  
70 of such registration and number plates to a person by the Commissioner  
71 of Motor Vehicles nor the listing of such person as a veteran by the  
72 Commissioner of Veterans Affairs shall constitute proof of such person's  
73 eligibility for any other benefit available to veterans.

74 (c) As used in this section, "eligible former reservist" means any  
75 person honorably discharged from, released under honorable  
76 conditions from or released with an other than honorable discharge  
77 based on a qualifying condition from, the United States Army Reserve,  
78 Army National Guard, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Coast  
79 Guard Reserve, Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard; and "veteran",  
80 "armed forces" and "qualifying condition" have the same meanings as  
81 provided in section 27-103.

82 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 14-20d of the general statutes is  
83 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
84 *2025*):

85 (b) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall, at the request of any  
86 veteran or member of the armed forces who received a campaign medal,  
87 issue special registration number plates to indicate service during a  
88 period of war. Such plates shall bear the words "(Name of War) Veteran"  
89 and shall be designed in consultation with the Commissioner of  
90 Veterans Affairs. The plates shall expire and be renewed as provided in  
91 section 14-22. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall charge a fee for  
92 such plates, which fee shall [cover] be not more than the entire cost of  
93 making such plates and shall be in addition to the fee for registration of  
94 such motor vehicle. No use shall be made of such plates except as official  
95 registration number plates.

96 Sec. 3. Section 14-19a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
97 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

98 (a) (1) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall adopt regulations  
99 in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 to establish [(1)] (A)  
100 standards for the issuance of a special certificate of registration and  
101 special number plates to a member of an organization which qualifies  
102 for issuance, [(2)] (B) qualifications of organizations whose members  
103 wish to apply for such special registrations, [(3)] (C) procedures for  
104 application for such special registration, and [(4)] (D) except as provided  
105 in subdivision (2) of this subsection, a fee for such special number plates  
106 which shall cover at least the entire cost of making the plates and which  
107 shall be in addition to the fee for registration of the motor vehicle. The  
108 regulations shall provide that a labor union shall be a qualifying  
109 organization.

110 (2) In the case of any veteran or member of the armed forces, as those  
111 terms are defined in section 27-103, who applies for any of the following  
112 special number plates and who is eligible to apply for such plate, the fee  
113 for such plate shall be not more than the entire cost of making such plate  
114 and shall be in addition to the fee for registration of the motor vehicle:

115 (A) Disabled American Veterans plate; (B) Greater Hartford Chapter of  
 116 the Eighty-Second Airborne plate; (C) Iwo Jima Survivor plate; (D)  
 117 Korean War Veterans Association plate; (E) Laos Veterans of America  
 118 plate; (F) Marine Corps League plate; (G) Military Order of the Purple  
 119 Heart plate; (H) National Guard Association of Connecticut (active)  
 120 plate; (I) National Guard Association of Connecticut (retired) plate; (J)  
 121 Pearl Harbor 1941 Survivor plate; and (K) United States Submarine  
 122 Veterans plate.

123 (b) The Department of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the Board  
 124 of Regents for Higher Education, shall adopt regulations, in accordance  
 125 with the provisions of chapter 54, to establish standards for the issuance  
 126 and renewal of collegiate special number plates with the logos or  
 127 emblems of Connecticut public and independent institutions of higher  
 128 education.

129 (c) On or after July 1, 2004, the commissioner may issue special  
 130 certificates of registration and special number plates in accordance with  
 131 the regulations adopted under subsection (a) of this section provided  
 132 the commissioner may not issue a set of special number plates bearing  
 133 the same numerals as any other plate issued by the department. The  
 134 commissioner may discontinue the issuance of any such special number  
 135 plates issued for a qualified organization, or special plates issued in  
 136 accordance with the provisions of sections 14-19b and 14-21f to 14-21p,  
 137 inclusive, at any time, upon written notice to the organization if, in the  
 138 opinion of the commissioner, the demand for such plates is insufficient  
 139 to support the costs of production.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2025	14-20b
Sec. 2	July 1, 2025	14-20d(b)
Sec. 3	July 1, 2025	14-19a

Section 1	July 1, 2025	14-20b
Sec. 2	July 1, 2025	14-20d(b)
Sec. 3	July 1, 2025	14-19a

VA Joint Favorable

*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.*

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## **OFA Fiscal Note**

### **State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Department of Motor Vehicles	TF - Revenue Loss	Less than 2,000	Less than 2,000

Note: TF=Transportation Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

Section 3 of the bill results in an annual revenue loss of less than \$2,000 to the Special Transportation Fund by reducing the fees on specific veterans and military organization license plates.

The other sections of the bill require that fees on standard veterans license plates "be not more than" the cost of making such plates (rather than simply "cover" the cost), and are not expected to have a fiscal impact as the language in the bill would not result in a change to these fees.

### **The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of plates issued.

**OLR Bill Analysis****HB 6734**

***AN ACT REDUCING FOR VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES THE FEE FOR CERTAIN SPECIALTY MOTOR VEHICLE NUMBER PLATES TO NOT MORE THAN THE COST TO MAKE SUCH PLATES.***

**SUMMARY**

This bill allows the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to charge veterans and members of the armed forces who apply for veterans license plates, wartime service plates, and certain military-related specialty motor vehicle license plates a fee of less than the cost to make the plates, and the cost of registration.

Under the bill, military-related specialty motor vehicle plates include:

1. Disabled American Veterans,
2. Greater Hartford Chapter of the Eighty-Second Airborne,
3. Iwo Jima Survivor,
4. Korean War Veterans Association,
5. Laos Veterans of America,
6. Marine Corps League,
7. Military Order of the Purple Heart,
8. National Guard Association of Connecticut (active),
9. National Guard Association of Connecticut (retired),
10. Pearl Harbor 1941 Survivor, and

## 11. United States Submarine Veterans.

Under current law, the fee for these plates must cover the entire cost of making the plates. DMV sets a fee (currently \$27.50) for a veterans or wartime service plate. Currently, the fee in regulations for bona fide members of the Purple Heart Association, Pearl Harbor Veteran's Association, or any veterans' organization is \$10 (Conn. Agencies Regs., § 14-19a-8).

The bill's changes apply to the standard fee for the plates, with numbers and letters selected by DMV. These fees are in addition to registration fees, and higher fees still apply for plate remakes and vanity plates, among other things.

The bill also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

### **BACKGROUND**

#### ***Definition of a Veteran***

A "veteran" is anyone honorably discharged or released under honorable conditions, or released with an other-than-honorable (OTH) discharge based on a qualifying condition, from active service in the armed forces (the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Space Force, Air Force, and any of their reserve components, including the Connecticut National Guard when under federal service) (CGS § 27-103).

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).



***Veteran Organization Plates***

By law, DMV has general authority to issue license plates on behalf of certain qualifying nonprofit organizations, including military and veterans' organizations. An applicant must (1) apply for these plates through the applicable organization, which sets the eligibility criteria and verifies the applicant's eligibility, and (2) pay a special fee, which the commissioner sets by regulation, for the initial plate (Conn. Agency Regs., § 14-19a-1 et seq.).

Organization eligibility requirements for these plates may include paying a membership fee or a donation to the organization, the amount of which is determined by the organization and not within DMV's purview.

***Related Bills***

sHB 5074, favorably reported by the Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee, requires the motor vehicles commissioner, at the request of a woman who is a veteran or member of the armed forces, to register a motor vehicle and issue a special certificate of registration and a set of license plates commemorating the woman's service.

HB 5787 (File 40), favorably reported by the Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee, allows veterans and members of the armed forces who get a license plate recognizing the Military Order of the Purple Heart to apply for reimbursement of the cost of joining a chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart in order to get the license plate.

HB 6724, favorably reported by the Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee, authorizes commemorative license plates in recognition of "The Borinqueneers" (the primarily Puerto Rican members of the 65th Infantry Regiment of the U.S. Army who served with distinction). A portion of the fee for the license plates must be used by Hispanic-American Veterans of Connecticut, Inc. to provide bilingual services and assistance to Connecticut veterans and members of the armed forces.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea     20     Nay   0     (03/11/2025)