

Legislative Analysis



WOMEN VETERANS SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATES

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

Senate Bill 788 (S-1) as passed by the Senate

Sponsor: Sen. Sylvia Santana

House Committee: Transportation, Mobility, and Infrastructure

Senate Committee: Transportation and Infrastructure

Complete to 11-7-24

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

(Enacted as Public Act 150 of 2024)

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 788 would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to allow a woman who meets either of the following to apply to the secretary of state (SOS) for a special license plate that has an appropriate vignette in front of the license plate number and the words “woman veteran” underneath:

- The woman was a member of the Michigan National Guard, the U.S. Armed Forces Reserve, or any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces and was called to active duty during a declared war or an armed conflict the United States participated in.
- The woman was a member of any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces (including reservists and the National Guard) and has retired or been granted an honorable discharge from that branch.

An application would have to be made on an SOS-approved form and be accompanied by any proof SOS requires that the applicant meets the above requirements. The application would not be subject to a service fee under section 804 of the code.

Upon proper application, SOS would have to issue one or more special plates for each applicant for use on a passenger vehicle. An applicant who is disabled would have to be issued a tab for persons with disabilities for the plate, upon showing the same proof of disability as is required for a permanent windshield placard. The person issued the special plates would be subject to the applicable registration tax for the vehicle. The plates would expire on the vehicle owner’s birthday. Proof of eligible veteran status would not be required for renewals.

Finally, the bill would provide that the use of a special woman veteran registration plate on a vehicle other than the one it was issued for, or by someone who does not qualify for it, is a misdemeanor, punishable under the code by imprisonment for up to 90 days or a fine of up to \$100, or both.

Proposed MCL 257.803t

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would result in costs to the Department of State of approximately \$60,000 to produce a new vehicle registration plate. Start-up costs include costs associated with design, computer programming, and materials. The bill would not require a service fee when applying for the new plate. The Department of State would likely be able to absorb all administrative and plate production costs within its annual appropriated budget. Revenue from vehicle registration taxes

would be deposited into the Michigan Transportation Fund, as are those for all other standard vehicle registration plates.

The bill also would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on local units of government. The number of convictions that would result under provisions of the bill is not known. New misdemeanor convictions would result in increased costs related to county jails or local misdemeanor probation supervision, or both. Costs of local incarceration in county jails and local misdemeanor probation supervision, and how those costs are financed, vary by jurisdiction. The fiscal impact on local court systems would depend on how provisions of the bill affected court caseloads and related administrative costs. It is difficult to project the actual fiscal impact to courts due to variables such as law enforcement practices, prosecutorial practices, judicial discretion, case types, and complexity of cases. Any increase in penal fine revenue would increase funding for public and county law libraries, which are the constitutionally designated recipients of those revenues.

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