AN ACT CONCERNING HMONG LAOTIAN SPECIAL GUERILLA UNITS SERVING IN THE KINGDOM OF LAOS.

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

Section 1. Section 14-20b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2020):

(a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, at the request of any veteran or member of the armed forces or the surviving spouse of such veteran or member, or (B) member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units, which units served in the United States secret war in the Kingdom of Laos during the Vietnam War, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall register any motor vehicle owned or leased for a period of at least one year by such veteran, member, surviving spouse or member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units and shall issue a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates for each such motor vehicle, including a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates for any motor vehicle used exclusively for farming purposes by any such veteran, [or] member, [of the armed forces, or the] surviving spouse [of such veteran or member] or member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units, who is engaged in agricultural production as a trade or business. The plates shall expire and be renewed as provided in section 14-22. The commissioner shall charge a fee for such plates, which fee shall cover the entire cost of making such plates and shall be in addition to the fee for registration of such motor vehicle.
(2) As used in this subsection, "member of the armed forces" has the
same meaning as provided in section 27-103 and "veteran" means any
person [(1)] (A) honorably discharged from, or released under
honorable conditions from active service in, the armed forces, or [(2)] (B)
with a qualifying condition, as defined in section 27-103, who has
received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from active
service in the armed forces.

(b) Any such member of the armed forces who is dishonorably
discharged shall return such plates to the commissioner not later than
thirty days after such discharge. The commissioner shall not renew such
plates for any motor vehicle owned or leased by any such member of
the armed forces who is dishonorably discharged.

Sec. 2. Section 14-36h of the general statutes is repealed and the
following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective October 1, 2020):

(a) Each motor vehicle operator's license issued by the Commissioner
of Motor Vehicles in accordance with section 14-36 and each identity
card issued by said commissioner in accordance with section 1-1h shall
contain the following: (1) The person's full legal name; (2) the person's
date of birth; (3) the person's gender; (4) the person's height and eye
color; (5) the person's assigned operator's license or identity card
number; (6) the person's address of principal residence in this state; (7)
the person's signature; (8) the person's photograph or digital image; and
(9) if applicable, the person's status as a veteran, as provided in
subsection (e) or (f) of this section.

(b) If any person does not reside in any state, territory or possession
of the United States because such person is on active military duty with
the United States Armed Forces, and such person's home state of record
is Connecticut, as reflected in the records of the Department of Defense,
Department of Homeland Security or any department under which the
United States Coast Guard operates, such person may obtain a
Connecticut operator's license or identity card, provided such person:
(1) Does not have an operator's license or identity card issued by another
state, territory or possession of the United States, or surrenders any such license or identity card; (2) has a current APO or FPO mailing address; (3) designates such person's home address as 60 State Street, Wethersfield, CT 06161; and (4) meets all other requirements for obtaining an operator's license or identity card in this state.

(c) The commissioner shall provide that each such license or identity card document contains physical security features designed to prevent tampering, counterfeiting or duplication of the document.

(d) Each such document shall also contain one or more machine-readable technology feature or component, including, but not limited to, a bar code or magnetic strip.

(e) Any person who is a veteran may submit a request to the Department of Veterans Affairs to have his or her status as a veteran contained on his or her motor vehicle operator's license or identity card. Said department shall, not later than thirty days after receipt of such request, verify whether such person is a veteran and, if so, notify the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of such request and verification. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall indicate such person's status as a veteran on any motor vehicle operator's license or identity card issued to such person upon original issuance or renewal of a motor vehicle operator's license or identity card or upon issuance of a duplicate motor vehicle operator's license or identity card.

(f) Any person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units may submit a request to the Department of Veterans Affairs to be listed as a veteran, based on such service, on his or her motor vehicle operator's license or identity card. Such person shall provide to said department (1) an affidavit stating (A) when such person served, (B) where such person served, (C) the unit in which such person served, and (D) the capacity in which such person served; (2) corroborating witness affidavits, if available; (3) any available official documentation of service; and (4) any other documents supporting such person's affidavit. Said department shall, not later than thirty days after
receipt of such request, verify whether such person was a member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units and, if so, notify the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of such request and verification. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall indicate veteran status on any motor vehicle operator's license or identity card issued to such person upon original issuance or renewal of a motor vehicle operator's license or identity card or upon issuance of a duplicate motor vehicle operator's license or identity card.

[(f)] (g) As used in this section: (1) "Full legal name" means the most complete version of the name that appears on a person's certificate of birth, official passport or other document or documents accepted by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to verify the person's identity, unless the person presents a marriage license or certificate, a certificate of civil union, a divorce decree or an order of a court of competent jurisdiction pertaining to a permanent change of the person's name; and (2) "veteran" means (A) any person honorably discharged from, or released under honorable conditions from active service in, the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, (B) any former member of the armed forces who is entitled to retirement pay under 10 USC Chapter 1223, as amended from time to time, or, but for age, would be so entitled, [or] (C) any person with a qualifying condition, as defined in section 27-103, who has received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from active service in the armed forces, or (D) any member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units, which units served in the United States secret war in the Kingdom of Laos during the Vietnam War.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (Effective October 1, 2020) (a) The Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Adjutant General, shall award a ribbon and medal to each member, as defined in subsection (b) of this section, who is a resident of this state. The commissioner, in consultation with the Adjutant General, shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, setting forth the process for designing the ribbon and medal, identifying such members who are eligible for the ribbon and medal under this section and
establishing procedures for distributing the ribbon and medal to each such eligible member. The cost of the ribbons and medals shall be paid from the funds appropriated to the military assistance account within the Military Department. Within existing budgetary resources, awards under this section may be made posthumously to any deceased member.

(b) As used in this section, "member" means any person who served in the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units, which units served in the United States secret war in the Kingdom of Laos during the Vietnam War.

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

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