

**Proposed Substitute
Bill No. 355**

LCO No. 2774

**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:

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 Section 14-20b of the general statutes is repealed and the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

3 (a) [The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, at] (1) At the request of any
4 (A) veteran or member of the armed forces or the surviving spouse of
5 such veteran or member, or (B) member of the Hmong Laotian special
6 guerilla units, which units served in the United States secret war in the
7 Kingdom of Laos during the Vietnam War, the Commissioner of Motor
8 Vehicles shall register any motor vehicle owned or leased for a period
9 of at least one year by such [person] veteran, member, surviving spouse
10 or member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units and shall issue
11 a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates for each
12 such motor vehicle, including a special certificate of registration and a
13 set of number plates for any motor vehicle used exclusively for farming
14 purposes by any such veteran, [or] member, [of the armed forces, or the]
15 surviving spouse [of such veteran or member] or member of the Hmong
16 Laotian special guerilla units, who is engaged in agricultural production
17 as a trade or business. The plates shall expire and be renewed as
18 provided in section 14-22. The commissioner shall charge a fee for such
19 plates, which fee shall cover the entire cost of making such plates and
20 shall be in addition to the fee for registration of such motor vehicle.

21 (2) As used in this subsection, "member of the armed forces" has the
22 same meaning as provided in section 27-103 and "veteran" means any
23 person [(1)] (A) honorably discharged from, or released under
24 honorable conditions from active service in, the armed forces, or [(2)] (B)
25 with a qualifying condition, as defined in section 27-103, who has
26 received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from active
27 service in the armed forces.

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

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 Section 14-36h of the general statutes is repealed and the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

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

45 (b) If any person does not reside in any state, territory or possession
46 of the United States because such person is on active military duty with
47 the United States Armed Forces, and such person's home state of record
48 is Connecticut, as reflected in the records of the Department of Defense,
49 Department of Homeland Security or any department under which the
50 United States Coast Guard operates, such person may obtain a
51 Connecticut operator's license or identity card, provided such person:
52 (1) Does not have an operator's license or identity card issued by another

53 state, territory or possession of the United States, or surrenders any such
54 license or identity card; (2) has a current APO or FPO mailing address;
55 (3) designates such person's home address as 60 State Street,
56 Wethersfield, CT 06161; and (4) meets all other requirements for
57 obtaining an operator's license or identity card in this state.

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

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

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

75 (f) Any person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian special
76 guerilla units may submit a request to the Department of Veterans
77 Affairs to be listed as a veteran, based on such service, on his or her
78 motor vehicle operator's license or identity card. Such person shall
79 provide to said department (1) an affidavit stating (A) when such person
80 served, (B) where such person served, (C) the unit in which such person
81 served, and (D) the capacity in which such person served; (2)
82 corroborating witness affidavits, if available; (3) any available official
83 documentation of service; and (4) any other documents supporting such
84 person's affidavit. Said department shall, not later than thirty days after

85 receipt of such request, verify whether such person was a member of the
86 Hmong Laotian special guerilla units and, if so, notify the
87 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of such request and verification. The
88 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall indicate veteran status on any
89 motor vehicle operator's license or identity card issued to such person
90 upon original issuance or renewal of a motor vehicle operator's license
91 or identity card or upon issuance of a duplicate motor vehicle operator's
92 license or identity card.

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

110 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2020*) (a) The Commissioner of
111 Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Adjutant General, shall award
112 a ribbon and medal to each member, as defined in subsection (b) of this
113 section, who is a resident of this state. The commissioner, in consultation
114 with the Adjutant General, shall adopt regulations, in accordance with
115 the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, setting forth the
116 process for designing the ribbon and medal, identifying such members
117 who are eligible for the ribbon and medal under this section and

118 establishing procedures for distributing the ribbon and medal to each
119 such eligible member. The cost of the ribbons and medals shall be paid
120 from the funds appropriated to the military assistance account within
121 the Military Department. Within existing budgetary resources, awards
122 under this section may be made posthumously to any deceased
123 member.

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

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	14-20b
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	14-36h
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	New section