House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 223

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 5074

House of Representatives, March 25, 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 A MOTOR VEHICLE NUMBER PLATE COMMEMORATING CONNECTICUT WOMEN VETERANS.

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 Section 14-20b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(a) (1) 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, shall register any motor vehicle owned or leased for a period of at least one year by such person and shall issue a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates commemorating such veteran's or member's military service 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, who is engaged in agricultural production as a trade or business.

(2) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, at the request of any woman veteran or woman member of the armed forces, shall register any motor vehicle owned or leased for a period of at least one year by such person and shall issue a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates commemorating such woman veteran's or woman member's military service 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 woman veteran or woman member of the armed forces who is engaged in agricultural production as a trade or business.

(3) The plates provided for under this subsection 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. The commissioner shall charge a fee of fifteen dollars to replace such plates that become mutilated or illegible. 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.

(b) (1) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, at the request of any person who was a 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, or any person who is an eligible former reservist, or the surviving spouse of any such person, and after verification from the Department of Veterans Affairs as provided under subdivision (2) or (3) **[**, as applicable,**]** of this subsection, as applicable, shall register any motor vehicle owned or leased for a period of at least one year by such person and shall issue a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates commemorating such person's military service 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 person, or

the surviving spouse of such person, 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) Any person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units, or the surviving spouse of such person, may submit a request to the Department of Veterans Affairs to be listed as a veteran, based on such person's service during the Vietnam War, for the purpose of obtaining a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates under subdivision (1) of this subsection. Such person, or the surviving spouse of such person, shall provide to said department (A) an affidavit stating (i) when such person served, (ii) where such person served, (iii) the unit in which such person served, and (iv) the capacity in which such person served; (B) any available corroborating witness affidavits; (C) any available official documentation of service; and (D) any other documents supporting such person's or such surviving spouse'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 verified, notify the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of such request and verification.

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

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

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

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	*July 1, 2025*	14-20b

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:
In Subsec. (b)(1), "subdivision (2) or (3), as applicable, of this subsection," was changed to "subdivision (2) or (3) **[**, as applicable,**]** of this subsection, as applicable," for consistency with standard drafting conventions.

VA *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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 $
Motor Vehicle Dept.	TF - Potential Revenue Gain/Cost	Minimal	Minimal

Note: TF=Transportation Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill establishes a commemorative license plate for women veterans and, to the extent such plates are requested, results in minimal fiscal impact to the Department of Motor Vehicles for associated plate costs and fee revenue.

The Out Years

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

OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5074

AN ACT CONCERNING A MOTOR VEHICLE NUMBER PLATE COMMEMORATING CONNECTICUT WOMEN VETERANS.

SUMMARY

This bill 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. The bill applies if the motor vehicle is owned or leased by the woman veteran or member for at least one year and includes a motor vehicle used exclusively for farming purposes by a woman veteran or woman member who is engaged in agricultural production as a trade or business.

By law, veterans, armed forces members, or their surviving spouses can request a special registration certificate and license plates under the same circumstances.

The bill also makes various 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).

Related Bills

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.

HB 6734, favorably reported by the Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee, reduces the fee for veterans and armed forces members for certain military-related license plates to the cost to make these plates.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/11/2025)