

SB 596 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs

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Meeting Dates: 2/4, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Department of Transportation to waive otherwise required vehicle registration fees and surcharges for veterans' recognition registration plates when requested to by any person eligible for such plates. The measure appropriates an unspecified amount from the General Fund to the Department of Transportation for the 2025-2027 biennium, which may be expended for this purpose.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Existing fees for veterans' license plates
- Potential funding sources for the program
- Applicability of and eligibility for proposed waiver

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 The amendment allows requests to waive the surcharge on veterans' recognition registration plates that goes to the Oregon Veterans' Homes. It changes the waiver eligibility from anyone eligible for such plates, to veterans who provide written proof to the Department of Transportation that they have a disability rating of at least 50 percent, and that the disability rating must be the result of an injury or illness incurred or aggravated during active military service.

Fiscal impact: Fiscal lite issued

Revenue impact: Minimal revenue impact

BACKGROUND:

The current iteration of the veterans' recognition registration plate program began in 2008 as a joint effort between the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs. Statute includes a surcharge of \$2.50 per plate for each year of registration, which is deposited in a trust fund paying for operations of Oregon Veterans' Homes.

Currently, only Gold Star Family members may request to waive the surcharge, which must be honored as long as the Legislative Assembly has appropriated funds for this purpose. Gold Star Family plates may only be granted to a parent, sibling, spouse, or dependent on a person killed in action during an armed conflict while serving in the United States Armed Forces. Standard passenger fees [currently apply](#) to veteran plates; additional fees do not apply to Gold Star Family plates, but do for other veteran plates.

Senate Bill 596 allows any person eligible for a veterans' recognition registration plate to request a waiver of the surcharge and appropriates an unspecified amount for this purpose.