

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2485
By: Sheffield, J. D.
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties report that current state law does not explicitly provide for a specialty license plate for recipients of the Air Medal and Air Medal with Valor even though similar military honors, such as the Bronze Star, are included as Legion of Valor designations for purposes of such license plates. Such parties observe that the Bronze Star and Air Medals, while similar with respect to honorary recognition of combat service, are awarded for different purposes. Interested parties note that the Bronze Star may not be presented for any activity dealing with aerial flight, while the Air Medal is awarded in times of airborne combat.

H.B. 2485 seeks to implement a suggestion from certain retired U.S. Air Force officers to make the issuance of certain specialty license plates more equal among the various branches of the U.S. armed forces by supplementing the list of Legion of Valor designated license plates with the Air Medal and Air Medal with Valor awards.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2485 amends the Transportation Code to require the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Air Medal and Air Medal with Valor. The bill requires such license plates to include the Air Medal emblem and to include the words "Air Medal" at the bottom of each plate. The bill requires license plates issued to recipients of the Air Medal with Valor that are not personalized to also include the letter "V" as a prefix or suffix to the numerals on each plate. The bill makes statutory provisions relating to the manufacture and issuance of specialty license plates for general distribution that are authorized to be issued by a law that takes effect on or after January 1, 1999, inapplicable to license plates authorized by the bill's provisions.

H.B. 2485 exempts a vehicle on which license plates authorized by the bill's provisions are displayed from the payment of a parking fee collected through a parking meter charged by a governmental authority other than a branch of the federal government when being operated by or for the transportation of the person who registered the vehicle under the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2013.