

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R3183 JRR-D

S.B. 769
By: Watson
Transportation
3/20/2017
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of this proposed legislation is to give appropriate honor and recognition to combat medics for their service by providing a specific specialty license plate in their honor.

Combat medics are subjected to similar hazards as combat troops, and have the additional responsibility of administering medical care under duress.

However, under current Texas law, there is no military-related specialty license plate for Combat Medic Badge recipients. This is a problem because there are specialty license plates for equally ranked badges in Texas like the Combat Infantry Badge and Combat Action Badge.

S.B. 769 remedies this inequity and allows Combat Medic Badge recipients to acquire a specialty license plate in their honor.

The Senate unanimously approved H.B. 1128 in the 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, that created the Combat Infantry Badge and Combat Action Badge military-related specialty plates, which are equivalently ranked badges in the military to the Combat Medic Badge. Because of that unanimous support, I believe S.B. 769 will have the same level of support and no opposition.

I anticipate zero fiscal implications from this bill. According to my office's military and DMV government relations contacts, this bill would be easy to implement and would have no negative fiscal impact. These specialty plates are not free, nor are they offered at a reduced rate, so they would not cost the state lost revenue.

As proposed, S.B. 769 amends current law relating to the issuance of specialty license plates for recipients of the Combat Medical Badge.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends the heading to Section 504.320, Transportation Code, as added by Chapter 708 (H.B. 1128), Acts of the 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, to read as follows:

Sec. 504.320. RECIPIENTS OF CERTAIN COMBAT BADGES, MEDALS, OR RIBBONS.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 504.320, Transportation Code, as added by Chapter 708 (H.B. 1128), Acts of the 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, by adding Subsection (c-1) and amending Subsection (d), as follows:

(c-1) Requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Combat Medical Badge. Requires license plates issued under this subsection to include the Combat Medical Badge emblem and to include the words "Combat Medical Badge" at the bottom of each plate.

(d) Requires that a specialty license plate issued under this section for a badge or ribbon that may be awarded more than once include only the emblem of the first award badge or ribbon. Deletes existing text requiring TxDMV, for purposes of Subsections (a) and (c), if a branch of the United States armed forces awards a Combat Action Badge or Ribbon with a unique emblem for each award of the Combat Action Badge or Ribbon to a recipient, to only issue specialty license plates that include the unique emblem of the first award.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.