By:  Wilson (Senate Sponsor - Hancock) H.B. No. 4861

(In the Senate - Received from the House May 10, 2023; May 11, 2023, read first time and referred to Committee on Transportation; May 19, 2023, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 8, Nays 0; May 19, 2023, sent to printer.)

COMMITTEE VOTE

                 Yea Nay Absent  PNV

Nichols           X

West              X

Alvarado          X

Eckhardt          X

Hancock           X

King              X

Miles             X

Parker            X

Perry                       X

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the design and issuance of specialty license plates to honor members of the military and for recipients of certain military awards.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Section 504.202(e-1), Transportation Code, is amended to read as follows:

(e-1)  Other than license plates issued under Subsection (h), license plates issued under this section may include, on request:

(1)  the emblem of the veteran's branch of service; or

(2)  one emblem from another license plate to which the person is entitled under Section 504.308, 504.309, 504.310(b), 504.311, 504.312, 504.313, 504.3135, 504.314, 504.315, 504.316, 504.3161, 504.318, 504.319, 504.320, 504.323, 504.325, [~~or~~] 504.327, 504.331, 504.332, 504.333, 504.334, or 504.335.

SECTION 2.  Section 504.301, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Subsection (a-1) to read as follows:

(a-1)  The department may consider recommendations for the design of specialty license plates under Subsection (a) from persons who are eligible to be issued a specialty license plate under this subchapter.

SECTION 3.  Section 504.3015, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (a-1) and (a-2) to read as follows:

(a)  A person applying for a set of license plates under this subchapter shall pay:

(1)  except as provided by Subsections (a-1) and (a-2), the registration fee required under Chapter 502; and

(2)  any [~~the~~] applicable special plate fee required under this section.

(a-1)  The department shall issue one set of license plates [~~, except that one set of license plates shall be issued~~] without the payment of the registration fee required under Chapter 502 for the first registration period and for each renewal of registration for which the vehicle is registered with license plates issued under:

(1)  Section 504.308;

(2)  Section 504.310(b);

(3)  Section 504.315, other than Subsections (c) and (q) of that section; and

(4)  Section 504.319.

(a-2)  The department shall issue one set of license plates without the payment of the registration fee required under Chapter 502 for the first registration period for which the vehicle is registered with license plates issued under:

(1)  Section 504.331;

(2)  Section 504.332;

(3)  Section 504.333;

(4)  Section 504.334; and

(5)  Section 504.335.

SECTION 4.  Subchapter D, Chapter 504, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Sections 504.331, 504.332, 504.333, 504.334, and 504.335 to read as follows:

Sec. 504.331.  TEXAS HOMELAND DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL. The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Texas Homeland Defense Service Medal. The license plates must include the Texas Homeland Defense Service Medal emblem and must include the words "Texas Homeland Defense Service Medal" at the bottom of each plate.

Sec. 504.332.  TEXAS SUPERIOR SERVICE MEDAL. The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Texas Superior Service Medal. The license plates must include the Texas Superior Service Medal emblem and must include the words "Texas Superior Service Medal" at the bottom of each plate.

Sec. 504.333.  LONE STAR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL. The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Lone Star Distinguished Service Medal. License plates issued under this subsection must include the Lone Star Distinguished Service Medal emblem and must include the words "Lone Star Distinguished Service Medal" at the bottom of each plate.

Sec. 504.334.  TEXAS OUTSTANDING SERVICE MEDAL. The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Texas Outstanding Service Medal. License plates issued under this subsection must include the Texas Outstanding Service Medal emblem and must include the words "Texas Outstanding Service Medal" at the bottom of each plate.

Sec. 504.335.  TEXAS MEDAL OF MERIT. The department shall issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Texas Medal of Merit. License plates issued under this subsection must include the Texas Medal of Merit emblem and must include the words "Texas Medal of Merit" at the bottom of each plate.

SECTION 5.  It is the intent of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, that the amendments made by this Act be harmonized with another Act of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, relating to nonsubstantive additions to and corrections in enacted codes.

SECTION 6.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

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