

SUBJECT: Exempting Distinguished Flying Cross medal recipients from parking fees

COMMITTEE: Defense and Veterans' Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 7 ayes — S. King, Frank, Aycock, Blanco, Farias, Schaefer, Shaheen
0 nays

WITNESSES: For — James Kiehle; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Patrick Nugent)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Kyle Mitchell, Texas Veterans Commission)

BACKGROUND: Current law provides for the issuance of specialty license plates for disabled veterans and recipients of various military awards. Transportation Code, sec. 681.008 exempts disabled veterans and certain military award recipients who display specialty license plates on their vehicles from parking meter fees charged by state and local governments.

DIGEST: HB 168 would add vehicles displaying a Distinguished Flying Cross medal specialty license plate to the list of vehicles currently exempt from parking meter fees charged by state and local governments.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2015.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 168 would recognize the exemplary service of Distinguished Flying Cross medal recipients, many of whom are Vietnam veterans, by providing to them the parking meter fee exemption associated with other military award specialty license plates.

The Distinguished Flying Cross medal is awarded to those who distinguished themselves by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight. The state has issued about 1,300 Distinguished Flying Cross medal specialty license plates since it became

available in 2004.

Due to an oversight, past legislation did not include this parking meter fee exemption for individuals who have the Distinguished Flying Cross medal license plate. Most specialty license plates issued by the state for various military awards and medals already include parking privileges, such as parking meter fee exemptions. The Distinguished Flying Cross medal license plate is the only specialty license plate for a meritorious service award that has not been granted parking privileges under state law.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition.