

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 2485
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Transportation
5/10/2013
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

H.B. 2485 supplements the list of Legion of Valor designated license plates with the Air Medal and Air Medal with Valor awards. Currently, a number of other similar military honors, such as the Bronze Star, are included as Legion of Valor designations.

The Bronze Star and Air Medals, while similar in regards to honorary recognition of combat service, are awarded for different purposes. The Bronze Star may not be presented for any activity dealing with aerial flight. Created in 1942, the Air Medal is awarded in times of airborne combat. Veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Cold War Era, Desert Storm, and Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom having earned either the Air Medal or Air Medal with Valor designation.

Based on a suggestion from retired Air Force officers from Copperas Cove, Texas, the bill will make the license plate designation more equal among the various branches of the United States Armed Forces.

H.B. 2485 amends current law relating to Air Medal and Air Medal with Valor specialty license plates.

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 Section 504.315, Transportation Code, by adding Subsection (a-1), as follows:

(a-1) Requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Air Medal and Air Medal with Valor. Requires that license plates issued under this subsection include the Air Medal emblem and to include the words "Air Medal" at the bottom of each plate. Requires that license plates issued under this subsection to recipients of the Air Medal with Valor that are not personalized also include the letter "V" as a prefix or suffix to the numerals on each plate. Provides that Section 504.702 (Specialty License Plates Authorized After January 1, 1999) does not apply to license plates authorized by this subsection.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 681.008(b), Transportation Code, as follows:

(b) Provides that a vehicle on which license plates described by Subsection (a)(2) (relating to authorizing a vehicle to park for an unlimited period in a parking space or area that is designated specifically for persons with physical disabilities if the vehicle displays certain license plates) or issued under Section 504.202 (Veterans with Disabilities), 504.315 (Military Specialty License Plates for Extraordinary Service), or 504.316 (Legion of Merit Medal Recipients), rather than Section 504.202, Section 504.315(a) (relating to requiring TxDMV to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Bronze Star Medal and Bronze Star Medal with Valor), (c) (relating to requiring

TxDMV to issue specialty license plates for a person who was captured and incarcerated by an enemy of the United States during a period of conflict with the United States), (d) (relating to requiring TxDMV to issue specialty license plates for survivors of the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941), (e) (relating to requiring TxDMV to issue specialty license plates to a recipient of a Congressional Medal of Honor awarded under Title 10, United State Code), (f) (relating to requiring TxDMV to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Air Force Cross or Distinguished Service Cross, the Army Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, or the Medal of Honor), (g) (relating to requiring TxDMV to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Purple Heart), or (h) (relating to requiring TxDMV to issue specialty license plates for recipients of the Silver Star Medal), or Section 504.316, are displayed is exempt 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 certain persons.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2013.