

2023 -- S 0436

LC001809

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES

Introduced By: Senators Felag, DiPalma, Lawson, Raptakis, Lauria, Murray, and Valverde

Date Introduced: February 16, 2023

Referred To: Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 31-3-46 and 31-3-62 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-3 entitled  
2 "Registration of Vehicles" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-3-46. P.O.W. plates.**

4 The administrator of the division of motor vehicles shall issue plates designated as "Ex-  
5 P.O.W." upon application on proper forms furnished by the administrator of the division of motor  
6 vehicles to former prisoners of war (P.O.W.) of World Wars I and II, the Korean conflict, and  
7 Vietnam conflict. The plates may be issued for any motor vehicle eligible for registration as an  
8 automobile, or a commercial vehicle having a gross weight of ~~ten thousand pounds (10,000 lbs)~~  
9 twelve thousand pounds (12,000 lbs) or less. The applicant shall not be required to pay a registration  
10 fee or service charge for the plate. Upon the death of the holder of any P.O.W. plates, the plates  
11 shall be transferred to his or her surviving spouse for the spouse's lifetime until he or she remarries.

12 **31-3-62. National guard plates.**

13 (a) The administrator of the division of motor vehicles is empowered and authorized to  
14 make available to all active and retired members of the Rhode Island army and air national guard a  
15 special motor vehicle registration plate for any motor vehicle eligible for registration as an  
16 automobile or a commercial vehicle having a gross weight of ~~eight thousand five hundred pounds~~  
17 ~~(8,500 lbs.)~~ twelve thousand pounds (12,000 lbs) or less.

18 (b) The special motor vehicle registration plate shall carry on it the designation "National  
19 Guard" and shall also carry on it an emblem on the left-hand side of the plate to be designed and

1 provided by the office of the adjutant general, with the numerals to the right of it.

2 (c) The administrator of the division of motor vehicles shall issue the plate upon the  
3 payment of a service charge of twenty dollars (\$20.00) and a transfer charge of five dollars (\$5.00)  
4 for the plate. All revenues shall be deposited as general revenues.

5 (d) For the purposes of this section an active or retired member of the Rhode Island army  
6 and air national guard shall be defined as any person certified by the adjutant general as currently  
7 serving or having retired under honorable conditions in either the Rhode Island army or air national  
8 guard.

9 (e) In a state of emergency, any active member of the army or air national guard driving a  
10 vehicle bearing the special motor vehicle registration plate shall be authorized and empowered to  
11 travel upon the highways of the state notwithstanding any driving ban imposed by any state or  
12 municipal authority.

13 SECTION 2. Section 31-6-8 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-6 entitled "Registration  
14 Fees" is hereby amended to read as follows:

15 **31-6-8. Disabled veterans.**

16 (a) Any veteran who has been honorably discharged from the service of the armed forces  
17 or the merchant marine of the United States in any of the wars or campaigns in which the United  
18 States has been engaged and who, while engaged in these wars or campaigns or as a result of  
19 engagement in these wars or campaigns, by reason of amputation, has lost one or both of his or her  
20 arms, hands, feet, or legs, or who, by reason of other permanent injury, has lost the use of one or  
21 both of his or her arms, hands, feet, or legs, or to whom has been granted a motor vehicle under  
22 chapter 870-2D, United States Public Laws 663, enacted 1946, 79th Congress, or has suitable  
23 documentation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to establish that the veteran:

24 (1) Has a combined service connected disability rating of one hundred percent (100%); or

25 (2) Is considered "individually unemployable" due to his or her service-connected  
26 disability, shall be exempt from the payment of any fee for the annual registration of and a license  
27 to operate that motor vehicle.

28 (b) The administrator for the division of motor vehicles shall issue to an eligible veteran  
29 for use on an automobile, or on a commercial vehicle having a gross weight of ~~six thousand three~~  
30 ~~hundred pounds (6,300 lbs.)~~ twelve thousand pounds (12,000 lbs) or less, registration plates  
31 designated "Disabled Veteran." Upon the death of the holder of "Disabled Veteran" plates, the  
32 plates may be transferred to his or her surviving spouse for his or her lifetime or until he or she  
33 remarries. Only one set of "Disabled Veteran" plates shall be issued to an eligible veteran and only  
34 after certification of eligibility from the Veterans' Administration or other satisfactory

1 documentation of eligibility is presented.

2 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect six (6) months after passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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- 1 This act would unify the weight limit of vehicles with special plates, including P.O.W.
- 2 plates, National Guard plates, and disabled veteran plates, to 12,000 pounds.
- 3 This act would take effect six (6) months after passage.

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