



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

2005 Assembly Bill 202	Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 and Senate Amendment 1 to the Substitute Amendment
<i>Memo published:</i> December 5, 2005	<i>Contact:</i> Philip G. Cardis, Staff Attorney (267-0683) Mary Offerdahl, Staff Attorney (266-2230)

Under current law, any group or organization may apply to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for designation as an authorized special group. If the application is approved, members of the authorized special group may obtain special distinguishing registration plates for certain vehicles, including automobiles and motor homes, that are owned or leased by special group members. A fee, in addition to the regular registration fee for the particular kind of vehicle, is assessed for the issuance or reissuance of most special plates.

Before October 2, 1998, authorized special groups whose members may obtain special distinguishing registration plates were specifically enumerated in state law. **Current law** provides that specific enumeration in state law of authorized special groups is limited to those special groups enumerated before October 2, 1998.

Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 creates exceptions to the general prohibition against specifically enumerating in state law special groups whose members may apply for special group registration plates. The substitute amendment establishes the following authorized groups that are military in nature: veterans of the Iraq War, the Afghanistan War, and Noble Eagles; students and alumni of the U.S. Military Academy (West Point), U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, and U.S. Merchant Marine Academy; and members of the Civil Air Patrol. In addition to the regular vehicle registration fee, special group members are required to pay a \$15 fee for issuance or reissuance of the special plates.

Also, the **substitute amendment** provides that the DOT consult with the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) before specifying the design of the Iraq War, the Afghanistan War, and the Noble Eagle plates. Further, prior to consultation with the DOT, the DVA shall solicit input from the state's veterans organizations regarding the design of the Iraq War, the Afghanistan War, and the Noble Eagle plates.

The **substitute amendment** provides a one-time appropriation increase to the DOT--Division of Motor Vehicles for \$18,200 from the transportation fund for the fiscal year in which this bill takes effect, to provide funding for the special registration plates created in the bill.

Also under **current law**, a person who is affiliated with a branch of the armed services or has another military affiliation may receive a specialized vehicle registration plate that reflects the person's affiliation. Upon the person's death, his or her surviving spouse may request DOT to permit the spouse to retain the plate. Under this **substitute amendment**, the surviving spouse may also request that the plate be personalized, modify any personalization on the plate, or request that a personalized plate be replaced with a regular plate. As under current law for other personalized registration plates, a surviving spouse pays a \$15 fee for personalizing plates or modifying the existing personalization, in addition to the costs of registering his or her vehicle.

Senate Amendment 1 to the substitute amendment deletes nonstatutory provisions on the last page of the substitute amendment that relate to the one-time appropriation increase to the DOT described above. Senate Amendment 1 also provides that all moneys received for the issuance or reissuance of a plate for specified special groups in excess of the lesser of \$37,800 (amended from \$27,600) or the initial production costs of plates for the special group for persons interested in supporting veterans and the special groups established by the substitute amendment (see description above) must be deposited in the Veterans Trust Fund.

Legislative History

On November 11, 2005, the Assembly adopted Assembly Substitute Amendment 1 by a voice vote on the floor. The Assembly then passed the bill as amended, by a vote of Ayes, 97; Noes, 0. Senate Amendment 1 to the substitute amendment was offered by Senator Brown. On December 2, 2005, the Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security, Military Affairs, Small Business and Government Reform recommended adoption of Senate Amendment 1, and concurrence in Assembly Bill 202 as amended, both on votes of Ayes, 5; Noes, 0.

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