



2021 ASSEMBLY BILL 161

March 16, 2021 - Introduced by Representatives THIESFELDT, ARMSTRONG, BALDEH, BROOKS, HORLACHER, KRUG, KUGLITSCH, MAGNAFICI, MOSES, ORTIZ-VELEZ, ROZAR, SINICKI and WICHGERS, cosponsored by Senators JACQUE, BRADLEY, BEWLEY and L. TAYLOR. Referred to Committee on Sporting Heritage.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 27.01 (7) (c) 11., 27.01 (8) (bn) 1., 29.164 (3m) (am), 29.193 (3)
2 (c) and 29.236 (1) of the statutes; **relating to:** the disability rating at which
3 veterans qualify for certain hunting and fishing authorizations and exemptions
4 from state park and trail admission fees.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill establishes a 50 percent disability rating for disabled veterans to qualify for certain hunting, fishing, and trapping approvals issued by the Department of Natural Resources and for exemptions from certain admission fees. Under current law, the qualifying disability rating is either 50 or 70 percent depending on the approval or exemption.

Under current law generally, a person may not operate a vehicle in a state forest, state park, or state natural area unless the vehicle has a valid vehicle admission receipt properly displayed. Current law also authorizes DNR to charge a fee to enter a state trail. Current law provides that vehicle admission receipts and state trail passes are not required for a state resident who is a veteran receiving benefits for disabilities resulting in a 70 percent disability rating. The bill reduces the qualifying disability rating to 50 percent.

Under current law, DNR issues various hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses, permits, and tags, referred to collectively as approvals. DNR also issues certain combination licenses, including conservation patron licenses. A conservation patron license confers upon the licensee the combined privileges of certain hunting, fishing, and trapping approvals and the authority to take a motor vehicle into state parks and

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certain other areas without a vehicle admission receipt. The bill requires DNR to issue a conservation patron license at a reduced fee to a state resident who is a veteran receiving benefits for disabilities resulting in a 50 percent disability rating.

Under current law, no person may fish in the waters of the state without a valid fishing license or approval authorizing fishing. Current law provides that, upon application from a state resident who is a veteran receiving benefits for disabilities resulting in a 70 percent disability rating, DNR must issue the veteran an annual fishing license for disabled persons at a reduced fee. The bill reduces the qualifying disability rating to 50 percent.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 27.01 (7) (c) 11. of the statutes is amended to read:

2 27.01 (7) (c) 11. Any vehicle, except a motor bus, occupied by a state resident
3 who produces evidence that shows that he or she is a veteran, as defined in 38 USC
4 101, and is receiving disability compensation benefits under 38 USC 1101 to 1163 as
5 individually unemployable under 38 USC 1502 or for disabilities that result in a
6 disability rating that is ~~70~~ 50 percent or greater under 38 USC 1114.

7 **SECTION 2.** 27.01 (8) (bn) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

8 27.01 (8) (bn) 1. Any state resident who produces evidence that shows that he
9 or she is a veteran, as defined in 38 USC 101, and is receiving disability compensation
10 benefits under 38 USC 1101 to 1163 as individually unemployable under 38 USC
11 1502 or for disabilities that result in a disability rating that is ~~70~~ 50 percent or
12 greater under 38 USC 1114.

13 **SECTION 3.** 29.193 (3) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

14 29.193 (3) (c) Produces evidence that shows that he or she is a veteran, as
15 defined in 38 USC 101, and is receiving disability compensation benefits under 38
16 USC 1101 to 1163 for disabilities that result in a disability rating that is ~~70~~ 50 percent

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1 or greater under 38 USC 1114 or 1134, or is receiving disability compensation
2 benefits due to being individually unemployable under 38 CFR 4.16 as authorized
3 under 38 USC 501.

4 **SECTION 4.** 29.235 (3r) of the statutes is created to read:

5 29.235 (3r) VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES. The department shall issue a
6 conservation patron license at the reduced fee under s. 29.563 (4) (a) 2w. to any
7 resident if the resident produces evidence that shows that he or she is a veteran, as
8 defined in 38 USC 101, and is receiving disability compensation benefits under 38
9 USC 1101 to 1163 for disabilities that result in a disability rating that is 50 percent
10 or greater under 38 USC 1114 or 1134, or is receiving disability compensation
11 benefits due to being individually unemployable under 38 CFR 4.16 as authorized
12 under 38 USC 501.

13 **SECTION 5.** 29.563 (4) (a) 2w. of the statutes is created to read:

14 29.563 (4) (a) 2w. Conservation patron issued to a veteran with a disability
15 under s. 29.235 (3r): \$60.25.

16 **SECTION 6.** 29.563 (13) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

17 29.563 (13) (b) *Surcharge for conservation patron license.* The surcharge for
18 licenses listed under sub. (4) (a) 2. ~~and, 2m., and 2w.~~ and (b) 2. and 2m. is \$4 and shall
19 be added to the fee specified for these approvals under sub. (4).

20 **SECTION 7. Effective date.**

21 (1) This act takes effect on March 1, 2022.

22 (END)