2007 SENATE BILL 20


AN ACT to amend 341.14 (6r) (g) and 341.14 (8) (a) and (b) of the statutes; relating to: special distinguishing registration plates for fire fighters and groups that are military in nature.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Current law allows the Department of Transportation (DOT) to issue special distinguishing registration plates for certain vehicles to members of certain authorized special groups enumerated by statute, including fire fighters. If a person issued special fire fighters’ plates is no longer a fire fighter, the person must dispose of the special fire fighters’ plates in a manner prescribed by DOT.

Also under current law, if special plates for a group that is military in nature have been issued to a person, upon application by the surviving spouse of that person, DOT may permit the surviving spouse to retain these special plates.

Under this bill, if a fire fighter has been issued special fire fighters’ plates and the fire fighter dies in the line of duty, DOT must allow the surviving spouse of the fire fighter, upon application to DOT, to retain the special fire fighters’ plates. DOT must also allow the surviving spouse, upon request, to change the plate from a personalized plate to a standard plate or from a standard plate to a personalized plate. The bill also makes these same special plate retention and modification provisions applicable under current law to special plates for groups that are military in nature mandatory upon DOT, rather than permissive.
For further information see the state 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:

SECTION 1. 341.14 (6r) (g) of the statutes is amended to read:

341.14 (6r) (g) Except as provided in sub. (8) (a), if an individual in possession of special plates under par. (f) 33., 34. or 48. or of personalized plates under s. 341.145 (1) (c) of the same color and design as special plates under par. (f) 33., 34. or 48. does not maintain membership in the applicable authorized special group during a year that is not a plate issuance year, the individual shall dispose of the special plates in a manner prescribed by the department.

SECTION 2. 341.14 (8) (a) and (b) of the statutes are amended to read:

341.14 (8) (a) If a special plate for a group associated with a branch of the armed services or otherwise military in nature has been issued to a person under this section, or if a special plate under par. (f) 33. has been issued to a person who dies in the line of duty, upon application by the surviving spouse of the person, the department may shall permit the surviving spouse to retain the plate. If the plate has been returned to the department or surrendered to another state, the department may shall reissue the plate to the surviving spouse. The department shall charge an additional fee of $15 to reissue the plate.

(b) For a plate retained under this subsection, upon request of the surviving spouse, the department may shall change the plate from a personalized plate to a standard plate. Upon request of a surviving spouse and upon payment of the additional fee under s. 341.145 (3), the department may shall personalize the plate or modify any existing personalization to the plate.
SECTION 3. Initial applicability.

(1) This act first applies to applications to retain special plates received by the department of transportation on the effective date of this subsection.