October 9, 2017 – Introduced by Senators STROEBEL, CRAIG, MARKLEIN and MOULTON, cosponsored by Representatives KREMER, SKOWRONSKI, ALLEN, BERNIER, BRANDTJEN, CROWLEY, DUCHOW, EDMING, FELZKOWSKI, GANNON, HORLACHER, KRUG, MASON, MILROY, MURPHY, MURSAU, NOVAK, OTT, PETRYK, PRONSCHINSKE, QUINN, RIPP, ROHRKASTE, SANFELIPPO, SPIROS, SUBECK, THIESFELDT and TITTL. Referred to Committee on Sporting Heritage, Mining and Forestry.

AN ACT to amend 29.194 (1) (b), 29.235 (3m), 29.563 (4) (a) 2s. and 29.563 (4) (b) 2s.; and to create 29.001 (14) and 45.13 of the statutes; relating to: hunting, trapping, and fishing approvals issued to recipients of a medal awarded by the U.S. armed forces that is equal to or higher than the Purple Heart medal in order of precedence and maintenance of a list of such medals by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources to treat a nonresident recipient of a U.S. armed forces award that is equal to or higher than the Purple Heart medal in order of precedence as a resident for purposes of issuing hunting, trapping, or fishing approvals. The bill also requires DNR to issue a conservation patron license at a reduced fee to a resident or nonresident applicant who has received a U.S. armed forces award that is equal to or higher than the Purple Heart medal in order of precedence. Under the bill, the Department of Veterans Affairs is required to maintain a list of medals awarded by the U.S. armed forces that are equal to or higher than the Purple Heart medal in order of precedence.

Under current law, DNR must treat a qualified member of the U.S. armed forces, a reserve unit of the U.S. armed forces, or the national guard or a nonresident who has received the Purple Heart medal as a resident for purposes of determining the member’s eligibility for, and cost of, obtaining hunting, trapping, or fishing
approvals. Fees for approvals issued to residents are lower than for those issued to nonresidents. This bill expands this treatment to a nonresident who has received a medal awarded by the U.S. armed forces that is equal to or higher than the Purple Heart medal in order of precedence.

Under current law, a conservation patron license confers a number of hunting, trapping, and fishing privileges and allows free vehicle admission to state parks and related areas. Under current law, DNR must issue a conservation patron license at a reduced fee to a resident or nonresident applicant who has received a Purple Heart medal. This bill expands this requirement to a resident or nonresident applicant who has received a medal awarded by the U.S. armed forces that is equal to or higher in order of precedence than the Purple Heart medal.

Under this bill, for purposes of a DNR determination of whether a person is a qualified recipient of a U.S. armed forces medal, verification by a county veteran services office is sufficient proof that a person has received an armed forces medal.

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:

SECTION 1. 29.001 (14) of the statutes is created to read:

29.001 (14) “Armed forces medal” means the Purple Heart medal or other medal awarded by the U.S. armed forces that is equal to or higher than the Purple Heart medal in order of precedence.

SECTION 2. 29.194 (1) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

29.194 (1) (b) The department shall treat a qualified recipient of a purple heart an armed forces medal, a qualified member of the armed forces, a qualified member of a reserve unit of the U.S. armed forces, or a qualified member of the national guard as a resident for purposes of determining the person’s eligibility for and cost of obtaining a hunting, trapping, or fishing approval under this chapter, except for a conservation patron license issued under s. 29.235 (3m). A qualified recipient of a purple heart an armed forces medal is a person who is not a resident who exhibits proof that he or she has received a purple heart an armed forces medal. Verification
by a county veteran services office is sufficient proof that a person has received an armed forces medal. A qualified member of the armed forces is a person who exhibits proof that he or she is in active service in the U.S. armed forces or in forces incorporated in the U.S. armed forces and that he or she is stationed in this state. A qualified member of a reserve unit of the U.S. armed forces is a person who exhibits proof that he or she is a member of a reserve unit of the U.S. armed forces located in this state. A qualified member of the national guard is a person who exhibits proof that he or she is a member of the Wisconsin national guard.

**SECTION 3.** 29.235 (3m) of the statutes is amended to read:

29.235 (3m) **Purple Heart Armed Forces Medal Conservation Patron License.**

The department shall issue a resident conservation patron license at the reduced fee under s. 29.563 (4) (a) 2s. to any resident applying for this license who exhibits proof that he or she has received a purple heart an armed forces medal. Verification by a county veteran services office is sufficient proof that a person has received an armed forces medal. The department shall issue a nonresident conservation patron license at the reduced fee under s. 29.563 (4) (b) 2s. to any person applying for this license who is not a resident and who exhibits proof that he or she has received a purple heart an armed forces medal.

**SECTION 4.** 29.563 (4) (a) 2s. of the statutes is amended to read:

29.563 (4) (a) 2s. Conservation patron issued under s. 29.235 (3m) to a recipient of the purple heart an armed forces medal: $9.25 or a greater amount at the applicant's option.

**SECTION 5.** 29.563 (4) (b) 2s. of the statutes is amended to read:
29.563 (4) (b) 2s. Conservation patron issued under s. 29.235 (3m) to a recipient of the purple heart an armed forces medal: $160.25 or a greater amount at the applicant’s option.

SECTION 6. 45.13 of the statutes is created to read:

45.13 Certain service medals. The department shall maintain and update as needed a list of each medal awarded by the U.S. armed forces that is equal to or higher than the Purple Heart medal in order of precedence. The department shall post the list on its Internet site and shall make the list available to all county veterans service offices and the department of natural resources for purposes of s. 29.001 (14).