



State of Wisconsin
2021 - 2022 LEGISLATURE

LRB-2376/1
ZDW:skw

2021 ASSEMBLY BILL 285

April 20, 2021 - Introduced by Representatives THIESFELDT, CALLAHAN, BRANDTJEN, MILROY and RAMTHUN, cosponsored by Senators JACQUE and FEYEN. Referred to Committee on Forestry, Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

1 **AN ACT** *to create* 30.579 and 30.77 (1) (c) of the statutes; **relating to:** veteran
2 boat launch permits.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources to issue a free boat launch permit to veterans over the age of 65 that authorizes access to public boat launches.

Current law does not require a fee for the use of boat launches. Rules promulgated by DNR encourage the free use of boat launches, but authorize the charging of reasonable launch fees to operate and maintain boat access sites owned or operated by municipalities, lake management districts, and other access providers.

Under the bill, a veteran who is over the age of 65 may apply to DNR for a boat launch permit. The veteran may apply, in-person or via mail, to DNR or to their county of residence. Neither DNR nor the county may charge any fee for the issuance of the permit. The permit is required to be affixed to the interior surface of the lower left-hand corner of the windshield of the vehicle used to trailer a boat and grants the person access to any public boat launch owned or operated by a municipality, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation district, or town sanitary district without being required to pay any fee.

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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.** 30.579 of the statutes is created to read:

2 **30.579 Veteran boat launch permits.** (1) Upon application by a veteran,
3 as defined in s. 45.01 (12), who is over the age of 65 and who provides the department
4 with a copy of the applicant's operator's license and a copy of the applicant's
5 certificate of release or discharge from active duty, the department shall issue a boat
6 launch permit that is valid for the calendar year in which it is issued. A veteran may
7 make the application under this subsection, in-person or via mail, to the department
8 or to the veteran's county of residence. If the application is received by a county, the
9 county shall issue the boat launch permit and forward the application to the
10 department. The department or the county may not charge any fee for the issuance
11 of a boat launch permit under this subsection.

12 (2) The person to whom a boat launch permit is issued shall affix the boat
13 launch permit by its own adhesive to the interior surface of the lower left-hand
14 corner of the windshield of the vehicle the person uses to trailer a boat.

15 (3) The person to whom a boat launch permit is issued may use the vehicle to
16 which the boat launch permit is affixed to access any public boat launch owned or
17 operated by a municipality, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation district,
18 or town sanitary district without being required to pay any fee.

19 **SECTION 2.** 30.77 (1) (c) of the statutes is created to read:

20 30.77 (1) (c) Require a veteran, as defined in s. 45.01 (12), who is over the age
21 of 65 and who is operating a vehicle to which a boat launch permit is affixed as

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1 provided under s. 30.579 (2) to pay any fee for the use of a public boat launch owned
2 or operated by the municipality, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation
3 district, or town sanitary district.

4 (END)