

SUBJECT: Including service branch emblems on certain specialty license plates

COMMITTEE: Defense and Veterans' Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Menéndez, R. Sheffield, Farias, Frank, R. Miller, Moody, Schaefer, Zedler

0 nays

1 absent — Collier

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* James Cunningham, Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations and Military Officers Association of America; Carlos Higgins, Austin Military Officers Association; Philip Lindner, National Guard Association of Texas; Patrick Hogan)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Randy Elliston, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles)

BACKGROUND: Transportation Code, sec. 504.202 allows the inclusion on the license plates of a disabled veteran one emblem that signifies the receipt of a certain military service medal, survival of the attack on Pearl Harbor, or that the veteran was wounded in combat or is a former prisoner of war.

DIGEST: HB 614 would allow disabled veterans to include on their specialty license plates the emblem of the branch of military in which they served or another emblem related to their military service to which they were entitled.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2013.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 614 would give disabled veterans the option to display on specialty license plates the Armed Forces branch emblem that honors their time serving in the U.S. military. The bill would allow disabled veterans to express their pride in the branch of the Armed Forces to which they were so closely linked and would help promote military service.

Displaying military emblems on specialty license plates that identify disabled veterans who served in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard would not be difficult because the state already produces customized emblems and insignia that promote a variety of organizations and interests, ranging from sports teams to cancer awareness and marine conservation. There would be no significant cost to the state to implement the bill.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No apparent opposition.

NOTES:

The companion bill, SB 530 by Birdwell, et al., was passed by the Senate by voice vote on March 27.