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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 214 (as reported without amendment)  
Sponsor: Senator Judy K. Emmons  
Committee: Veterans, Military Affairs, and Homeland Security

(as enrolled)

Date Completed: 4-13-11

## **RATIONALE**

For many years, Michigan has honored military veterans by allowing them to obtain specially designated license plates indicating their status as veterans of the U.S. Armed Services. Under the Michigan Vehicle Code, these plates are available only for use on a passenger vehicle. Many veterans, however, enjoy riding motorcycles. Some people believe that veterans should be allowed to purchase military plates for their motorcycles as well as their cars.

## **CONTENT**

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to provide for the availability of military specialty license plates for motorcycles.

The Code allows a person who was a member of any branch of the U.S. Armed Services, who has retired or been granted an honorable discharge from that branch, to apply to the Secretary of State for a special registration plate that displays an appropriate vignette preceding the registration numbers. Upon proper application and payment of the \$5 service fee, the Secretary of State must issue one or more special registration plates for each applicant for use on a passenger vehicle. Under the bill, the Secretary of State also would have to issue one or more such plates for use on a motorcycle.

MCL 257.803i

## **ARGUMENTS**

*(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)*

### **Supporting Argument**

Allowing motorists to display their status as veterans on vehicle license plates is one way in which the State and its residents honor veterans for their service in defense of the country. Many veterans ride motorcycles in addition to driving cars, and some even participate with their motorcycle clubs, such as the Patriot Guard Riders, in funeral processions for military personnel. Sometimes, members of these clubs attend funerals of men and women who died in combat, at which extremists picket and stage protests. Allowing those veterans to obtain military plates for their motorcycles may seem like a small thing, but it would serve as a further reminder of their service and sacrifice.

### **Supporting Argument**

Michigan is one of the leading states for supporting veterans, with programs such as veterans' preferences for State contracts, tax check-offs for funds to support military families, and specially designated vehicle license plates. Expanding the availability of military license plates to motorcycles would be consistent with Michigan's efforts to honor veterans.

Legislative Analyst: Patrick Affholter

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Joe Carrasco

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.