

**Unofficial Draft Copy**

As of: February 15, 2002 (3:00PM)

LC5554

\*\*\*\* Bill No. \*\*\*\*

Introduced By \*\*\*\*\*

By Request of the \*\*\*\*\*

A Bill for an Act entitled: "An Act providing that the surviving spouse of a veteran who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-connected disability is exempt from paying certain vehicle registration fees provided that the spouse does not remarry; providing that the surviving spouse of a 100% service-connected disabled veteran may retain the special license plates issues to that veteran for a flat \$5 registration fee in lieu of other vehicle registration taxes and fees; amending sections 61-3-321 and 61-3-560, MCA; and providing an effective date."

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Montana:

**Section 1.** Section 61-3-321, MCA, is amended to read:

**"61-3-321. Registration fees of vehicles -- certain vehicles exempt from license or registration fees -- disposition of fees.** (1) Registration or license fees must be paid upon registration or reregistration of motor vehicles, trailers, and semitrailers, in accordance with this chapter, as follows:

- (a) light vehicles under 2,850 pounds, \$13.75;
- (b) trailers with a declared weight of less than 2,500 pounds and semitrailers, \$8.25;
- (c) motor vehicles registered pursuant to 61-3-411 that are:
  - (i) over 2,850 pounds, \$10; and

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- (ii) under 2,850 pounds, \$5;
  - (d) off-highway vehicles registered pursuant to 23-2-817, \$9;
  - (e) light vehicles over 2,850 pounds, trucks and buses less than 1 ton, and heavy trucks in excess of 1 ton, \$18.75;
  - (f) logging trucks less than 1 ton, \$23.75;
  - (g) motor homes, \$22.25;
  - (h) motorcycles and quadricycles, \$9.75;
  - (i) trailers and semitrailers between 2,500 and 6,000 pounds, \$11.25;
  - (j) trailers and semitrailers in excess of 6,000 pounds, \$16.25;
  - (k) travel trailers, \$11.75; and
  - (l) recreational vehicles, \$3.50.
- (2) If a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer is originally registered 6 months after the time of registration as set by law, the registration or license fee for the remainder of the year is one-half of the regular fee.
- (3) An additional fee of \$5 must be collected for the registration of each motorcycle as a safety fee and must be deposited in the state motorcycle safety account provided for in 20-25-1002.
- (4) A fee of \$2 for each set of new number plates must be collected when number plates provided for under 61-3-332(2) are issued.
- (5) The provisions of this part with respect to the payment of registration fees do not apply to and are not binding upon motor vehicles, trailers, semitrailers, or tractors owned or controlled by the United States of America or any state, county, city, or special

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district, as defined in 18-8-202.

(6) (a) Except as provided in subsection (6)(b) and 61-3-562, a fee of 25 cents a year for each registration of a vehicle must be collected when a vehicle is registered or reregistered. The revenue derived from this fee must be forwarded by the county treasurer for deposit in the general fund for transfer to the credit of the senior citizens and persons with disabilities transportation services account provided for in 7-14-112.

(b) The following vehicles are not subject to the fee imposed in subsection (6)(a):

(i) trailers and semitrailers registered in other jurisdictions and registered through a proportional registration agreement; and

(ii) travel trailers, recreational vehicles, and off-highway vehicles registered pursuant to 23-2-817.

(7) The provisions of this section relating to the payment of registration fees or new number plate fees do not apply when number plates are transferred to a replacement vehicle under 61-3-317, 61-3-332, or 61-3-335.

(8) A person qualifying under 61-3-332(10)(d) or who is the surviving spouse of a veteran who died on active duty or as the result of a service-connected disability and who does not remarry is exempt from the fees required under this section.

(9) Except as otherwise provided in this section, revenue collected under this section must be deposited in the state general fund."

{ x Internal References to 61-3-321:

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15-1-121	15-1-122	15-1-122	15-1-122
23-2-804	23-2-804	61-3-303	61-3-312
61-3-317	61-3-325	61-3-332	61-3-332
61-3-426	61-3-456	61-3-457	61-3-527
61-3-527	61-3-560	61-3-562	61-3-562
61-3-562	61-3-721	61-3-721	61-4-310 }

**Section 2.** Section 61-3-332, MCA, is amended to read:

**"61-3-332. (Temporary) Number plates.** (1) A motor vehicle that is driven upon the streets or highways of Montana must display both front and rear number plates, bearing the distinctive number assigned to the vehicle.

(2) In addition to special license plates, collegiate license plates, and generic specialty license plates authorized under this chapter, a separate series of number plates must be issued, in the manner specified, for each of the following vehicle or dealer types:

(a) passenger vehicles, including automobiles, vans, and sport utility vehicles;

(b) motorcycles and quadricycles, bearing the letters "MC" or "CYCLE";

(c) trucks, bearing the letter "T" or the word "TRUCK";

(d) trailers, bearing the letters "TR" or the word "TRAILER";

(e) dealers of new, or new and used, motor vehicles, including trucks and trailers, bearing the letter "D" or the word "DEALER";

(f) dealers of used motor vehicles only, including trucks and trailers, bearing the letters "UD" or the letter "U" and the word "DEALER";

(g) dealers of motorcycles or quadricycles, bearing the letters "MCD" or the letters "MC" and the word "DEALER";

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(h) dealers of trailers or semitrailers, bearing the letters "DTR" or the letters "TR" and the word "DEALER"; and

(i) dealers of recreational vehicles, bearing the letters "RV" or the letter "R" and the word "DEALER".

(3) (a) Except as provided in 61-3-479 and subsections (4)(c) and (4)(d) of this section, all number plates for motor vehicles must be issued for a maximum period of 4 years, bear a distinctive marking, and be furnished by the department. In years when number plates are not issued, the department shall provide nonremovable stickers bearing appropriate registration numbers that must be affixed to the license plates in use.

(b) For motorcycles, quadricycles, and light vehicles that are permanently registered as provided in 61-3-527 or 61-3-315 and 61-3-562, the department shall provide distinctive nonremovable stickers indicating that the vehicle is permanently registered. The stickers must be affixed to the license plates in use.

(4) (a) Subject to the provisions of this section, the department shall create a new design for number plates as provided in this section, and it shall manufacture the newly designed number plates for issuance after December 31, 1999, to replace at renewal, as required in 61-3-312 and 61-3-314, number plates that were displayed on motor vehicles before that date.

(b) Beginning January 1, 2000, the department shall manufacture and issue new number plates every 4 years.

(c) A light vehicle that is registered for a 24-month period, as provided in 61-3-315 and 61-3-560, may display the number plate and plate design in effect at the time of registration for the entire

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24-month registration period.

(d) A motorcycle, quadricycle, or light vehicle that is permanently registered, as provided in 61-3-527 or 61-3-315 and 61-3-562, may display the number plate and plate design in effect at the time of registration for the entire period that the vehicle is permanently registered.

(5) In the case of passenger vehicles and trucks, plates must be of metal 6 inches wide and 12 inches in length. Except for generic specialty license plates, the outline of the state of Montana must be used as a distinctive border on the license plates, and the word "Montana" must be placed on each plate. Registration plates must be treated with a reflectorized background material according to specifications prescribed by the department.

(6) The distinctive registration numbers must begin with a number one or with a letter-number combination, such as "A 1" or "AA 1", or any other similar combination of letters and numbers. Except for special license plates, collegiate license plates, and generic specialty license plates, the distinctive registration number or letter-number combination assigned to the vehicle must appear on the plate preceded by the number of the county and appearing in horizontal order on the same horizontal baseline. The county number must be separated from the distinctive registration number by a separation mark unless a letter-number combination is used. The dimensions of the numerals and letters must be determined by the department, and all county and registration numbers must be of equal height.

(7) For the use of exempt motor vehicles and motor vehicles

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that are exempt from the registration fee as provided in 61-3-560(2)(a), in addition to the markings provided in this section, number plates must bear the following distinctive markings:

(a) For vehicles owned by the state, the department may designate the prefix number for the various state departments. All numbered plates issued to state departments must bear the words "State Owned", and a year number may not be indicated on the plates because these numbered plates are of a permanent nature and will be replaced by the department only when the physical condition of numbered plates requires it.

(b) For vehicles that are owned by the counties, municipalities, and special districts, as defined in 18-8-202, organized under the laws of Montana and not operating for profit, and that are used and operated by officials and employees in the line of duty and for vehicles on loan from the United States government or the state of Montana to, or owned by, the civil air patrol and used and operated by officials and employees in the line of duty, there must be placed on the number plates assigned, in a position that the department may designate, the letter "X" or the word "EXEMPT". Distinctive registration numbers for plates assigned to motor vehicles of each of the counties in the state and those of the municipalities and special districts that obtain plates within each county must begin with number one and be numbered consecutively. Because these number plates are of a permanent nature, they are subject to replacement by the department only when the physical condition of the number plates requires it and a year number may not be displayed on the number plates.

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(8) Number plates issued to a passenger vehicle, truck, trailer, motorcycle, or quadricycle may be transferred only to a replacement passenger vehicle, truck, trailer, motorcycle, or quadricycle. A registration or license fee may not be assessed upon a transfer of a number plate under 61-3-317 and 61-3-335.

(9) For the purpose of this chapter, the several counties of the state are assigned numbers as follows: Silver Bow, 1; Cascade, 2; Yellowstone, 3; Missoula, 4; Lewis and Clark, 5; Gallatin, 6; Flathead, 7; Fergus, 8; Powder River, 9; Carbon, 10; Phillips, 11; Hill, 12; Ravalli, 13; Custer, 14; Lake, 15; Dawson, 16; Roosevelt, 17; Beaverhead, 18; Chouteau, 19; Valley, 20; Toole, 21; Big Horn, 22; Musselshell, 23; Blaine, 24; Madison, 25; Pondera, 26; Richland, 27; Powell, 28; Rosebud, 29; Deer Lodge, 30; Teton, 31; Stillwater, 32; Treasure, 33; Sheridan, 34; Sanders, 35; Judith Basin, 36; Daniels, 37; Glacier, 38; Fallon, 39; Sweet Grass, 40; McCone, 41; Carter, 42; Broadwater, 43; Wheatland, 44; Prairie, 45; Granite, 46; Meagher, 47; Liberty, 48; Park, 49; Garfield, 50; Jefferson, 51; Wibaux, 52; Golden Valley, 53; Mineral, 54; Petroleum, 55; Lincoln, 56. Any new counties must be assigned numbers by the department as they may be formed, beginning with the number 57.

(10) Each type of special license plate approved by the legislature, except collegiate license plates authorized in 61-3-463 and generic specialty license plates authorized in 61-3-472 through 61-3-481, must be a separate series of plates, numbered as provided in subsection (6), except that the county number must be replaced by a nonremovable design or decal designating the group or organization to which the applicant belongs. Unless otherwise specifically stated

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in this section, the special plates are subject to the same rules and laws as govern the issuance of regular license plates, must be placed or mounted on a vehicle owned by the person who is eligible to receive them, and must be removed upon sale or other disposition of the vehicle. The special license plates must be issued to national guard members, former prisoners of war, persons with disabilities, reservists, disabled veterans, survivors of the Pearl Harbor attack, veterans of the armed services, national guard veterans, legion of valor members, or veterans of the armed services who were awarded the purple heart medal, who comply with the following provisions:

(a) (i) An active member of the Montana national guard may be issued special license plates with a design or decal displaying the letters "NG". The adjutant general shall issue to each active member of the Montana national guard a certificate authorizing the department to issue national guard plates, numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, and the member shall surrender the plates to the department upon becoming ineligible to use them.

(ii) The department may issue national guard veteran plates, bearing a design or decal displaying the Montana national guard insignia and the words "National Guard veteran" and numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, to an applicant who presents to the department a copy of certification of national guard retirement eligibility issued by the appropriate authorities for the applicant or the applicant's deceased spouse and who pays, in addition to all taxes and fees required by parts 3 and 5 of this chapter, a national guard veteran license plate fee of \$10. The additional fee must be distributed in accordance with the provisions

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of subsection (12).

(b) An active member of the reserve armed forces of the United States of America who is a resident of this state may be issued special license plates with a design or decal displaying the following: United States army reserve, AR (symbol); United States naval reserve, NR (anchor); United States air force reserve, AFR (symbol); and United States marine corps reserve, MCR (globe and anchor). The commanding officer of each armed forces reserve unit shall issue to each eligible member of the reserve unit a certificate authorizing the issuance of special license plates, numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set. The member shall surrender the plates to the department upon becoming ineligible to use them.

(c) (i) Subject to the limitation in 61-3-435, a resident of Montana who is a veteran of the armed forces of the United States and who has been awarded the purple heart and is 50% or more disabled because of an injury that has been determined by the department of veterans affairs to be service-connected or who is 100% disabled because of an injury that has been determined by the department of veterans affairs to be service-connected may, upon presentation to the department of documentation required in subsection (10)(f)(i) proof of the required disability, be issued:

(A) a special license plate under this section with the purple heart decal or a design or decal displaying the letters "DV"; or

(B) one set of any other military-related plates that the 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple hear or the disabled veteran is eligible to receive under this section.

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(ii) The fee for original or renewal registration by a 100% disabled veteran for a motor vehicle, as defined in 61-1-102, that is not used for commercial purposes is \$5 and is in lieu of all other fees and taxes for that vehicle under this chapter irrespective of which set of military license plates the veteran is eligible to receive and chooses to display under subsection (10)(c)(i).

(iii) The fee for original or renewal registration for a motor vehicle, as defined in 61-1-102, that is not used for commercial purposes by a 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart and who meets the criteria in subsection (10)(c)(i) is \$5 and is in lieu of other taxes and fees for that vehicle under this chapter, except for the \$10 fee required in subsection (10)(f)(iii), regardless of which set of military license plates the veteran is eligible to receive and chooses to display under subsection (10)(c)(i). Special license plates issued to a 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart under subsection (10)(c) may be retained by a surviving spouse, subject to payment of all taxes and fees required under parts 3 and 4 of this chapter as provided in subsection (10)(f)(iii).

(iv) Special license plates issued to a disabled veteran and, except as provided in subsection (10)(c)(iii), to a 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart are not transferable to another person.

(v) A 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart or a disabled veteran is not entitled to a special license plate for more than one vehicle.

(vi) A vehicle that is lawfully displaying a disabled veteran's

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plate with a design or decal displaying the letters "DV" and that is conveying a 100% disabled veteran is entitled to the parking privileges allowed a person with a disability's vehicle under this title.

(d) (i) A Montana resident who is a veteran of the armed forces of the United States and was captured and held prisoner by a military force of a foreign nation, documented by the veteran's service record, may upon application and presentation of proof be issued special license plates, numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, with a design or decal displaying the words "ex-prisoner of war" or an abbreviation that the department considers appropriate.

(ii) Fees required under 61-3-321(1) and (6) may not be assessed upon one set of license plates issued to an ex-prisoner of war under this subsection (10)(d).

(iii) A special license plate fee may not be assessed upon one set of special license plates issued to an ex-prisoner of war under this subsection (10)(d).

(iv) An ex-prisoner of war is exempt from the registration fees imposed under 61-3-560 through 61-3-562 for one vehicle that displays a set of ex-prisoner of war license plates.

(v) A surviving spouse of an ex-prisoner of war may retain the special license plates that have been issued to the ex-prisoner of war if the spouse complies with the provisions of 61-3-457.

(e) Except as provided in subsections (10)(c) and (10)(d), upon payment of all taxes and fees required by parts 3 and 5 of this chapter and upon furnishing proof satisfactory to the department that

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the applicant meets the requirements of this subsection (10)(e), the department shall issue to a Montana resident who is a veteran of the armed services of the United States special license plates, numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, designed to indicate that the applicant is a survivor of the Pearl Harbor attack if the applicant was a member of the United States armed forces on December 7, 1941, was on station on December 7, 1941, during the hours of 7:55 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. (Hawaii time) at Pearl Harbor, the island of Oahu, or was offshore at a distance of not more than 3 miles, and received an honorable discharge from the United States armed forces. If special license plates issued under subsection (10)(d) and this subsection are lost, stolen, or mutilated, the recipient of the plates is entitled to replacement plates upon request and without charge.

(f) A motor vehicle owner and resident of this state who is a veteran or the surviving spouse of a veteran of the armed services of the United States may be issued license plates inscribed as provided in subsection (10)(f)(i) if the veteran was separated from the armed services under other than dishonorable circumstances or was awarded the purple heart medal:

(i) Upon submission of a department of defense form 214(DD-214) or its successor or documents showing an other-than-dishonorable discharge or a reenlistment, proper identification, and other relevant documents to show an applicant's qualification under this subsection, there must be issued to the applicant, in lieu of the regular license plates prescribed by law, special license plates numbered in sets of two with a different

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number on each set. The plates must display:

(A) the word "VETERAN" and a symbol signifying the United States army, United States navy, United States air force, United States marine corps, or United States coast guard, according to the record of service verified in the application; or

(B) a symbol representing the purple heart medal.

(ii) Plates must be furnished by the department to the county treasurer, who shall issue them to a qualified veteran or to the veteran's surviving spouse. The plates must be placed or mounted on the vehicle owned by the veteran or the veteran's surviving spouse designated in the application and must be removed upon sale or other disposition of the vehicle.

(iii) Except as provided for 100% disabled veterans and ex-prisoners of war in subsections (10)(c) and (10)(d), a veteran or surviving spouse who receives special license plates under this subsection (10)(f) is liable for payment of all taxes and fees required under parts 3 and 4 of this chapter and a special veteran's or purple heart medal license plate fee of \$10.

(g) A Montana resident who is eligible to receive a special parking permit under 49-4-301 may, upon written application on a form prescribed by the department, be issued a special license plate with a design or decal bearing a representation of a wheelchair as the symbol of a person with a disability.

(h) The department may issue legion of valor license plates, bearing a design or decal depicting the recognized legion of valor medallion and numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, to an applicant who presents to the department proper

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documentation of receipt of a legion of valor award by appropriate authorities to the applicant or the applicant's deceased spouse and who pays all taxes and fees required by parts 3 and 5 of this chapter.

(i) An active member of the armed forces of the United States who is a resident of the state or who is stationed outside of Montana may be issued special license plates inscribed as provided in subsection (10)(f)(i)(A). The member's commanding officer may issue a certificate or some other relevant document to show the applicant's qualification and authorizing the issuance of the special license plates in sets of two with a different number on each set. The member is liable for payment of all taxes and fees required by this chapter, except as provided in 61-3-456.

(11) The provisions of this section do not apply to a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer that is registered as part of a fleet, as defined in 61-3-712, and that is subject to the provisions of 61-3-711 through 61-3-733.

(12) Fees collected under this section must be deposited in the state general fund.

**61-3-332. (Effective July 1, 2005) Number plates.** (1) A motor vehicle that is driven upon the streets or highways of Montana must display both front and rear number plates, bearing the distinctive number assigned to the vehicle.

(2) In addition to special license plates and collegiate license plates authorized under this chapter, a separate series of number plates must be issued, in the manner specified, for each of the following vehicle or dealer types:

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(a) passenger vehicles, including automobiles, vans, and sport utility vehicles;

(b) motorcycles and quadricycles, bearing the letters "MC" or "CYCLE";

(c) trucks, bearing the letter "T" or the word "TRUCK";

(d) trailers, bearing the letters "TR" or the word "TRAILER";

(e) dealers of new, or new and used, motor vehicles, including trucks and trailers, bearing the letter "D" or the word "DEALER";

(f) dealers of used motor vehicles only, including trucks and trailers, bearing the letters "UD" or the letter "U" and the word "DEALER";

(g) dealers of motorcycles or quadricycles, bearing the letters "MCD" or the letters "MC" and the word "DEALER";

(h) dealers of trailers or semitrailers, bearing the letters "DTR" or the letters "TR" and the word "DEALER"; and

(i) dealers of recreational vehicles, bearing the letters "RV" or the letter "R" and the word "DEALER".

(3) (a) Except as provided in subsections (4)(c) and (4)(d), all number plates for motor vehicles must be issued for a maximum period of 4 years, bear a distinctive marking, and be furnished by the state. In years when number plates are not issued, the department shall provide nonremovable stickers bearing appropriate registration numbers that must be affixed to the license plates in use.

(b) For motorcycles, quadricycles, and light vehicles that are permanently registered as provided in 61-3-527 or 61-3-315 and 61-3-562, the department shall provide distinctive nonremovable stickers indicating that the vehicle is permanently registered. The

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stickers must be affixed to the license plates in use.

(4) (a) Subject to the provisions of this section, the department shall create a new design for number plates as provided in this section, and it shall manufacture the newly designed number plates for issuance after December 31, 1999, to replace at renewal, as required in 61-3-312 and 61-3-314, number plates that were displayed on motor vehicles before that date.

(b) Beginning January 1, 2000, the department shall manufacture and issue new number plates every 4 years.

(c) A light vehicle that is registered for a 24-month period, as provided in 61-3-315 and 61-3-560, may display the number plate and plate design in effect at the time of registration for the entire 24-month registration period.

(d) A motorcycle, quadricycle, or light vehicle that is permanently registered, as provided in 61-3-527 or 61-3-315 and 61-3-562, may display the number plate and plate design in effect at the time of registration for the entire period that the vehicle is permanently registered.

(5) In the case of passenger vehicles and trucks, plates must be of metal 6 inches wide and 12 inches in length. The outline of the state of Montana must be used as a distinctive border on the license plates, and the word "Montana" and the year must be placed across the plates. Registration plates must be treated with a reflectorized background material according to specifications prescribed by the department.

(6) The distinctive registration numbers must begin with a number one or with a letter-number combination, such as "A 1" or "AA

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1", or any other similar combination of letters and numbers. The distinctive registration number or letter-number combination assigned to the vehicle must appear on the plate preceded by the number of the county and appearing in horizontal order on the same horizontal baseline. The county number must be separated from the distinctive registration number by a separation mark unless a letter-number combination is used. The dimensions of the numerals and letters must be determined by the department, and all county and registration numbers must be of equal height.

(7) For the use of exempt motor vehicles and motor vehicles that are exempt from the registration fee as provided in 61-3-560(2)(a), in addition to the markings provided in this section, number plates must bear the following distinctive markings:

(a) For vehicles owned by the state, the department may designate the prefix number for the various state departments. All numbered plates issued to state departments must bear the words "State Owned", and a year number may not be indicated on the plates because these numbered plates are of a permanent nature and will be replaced by the department only when the physical condition of numbered plates requires it.

(b) For vehicles that are owned by the counties, municipalities, and special districts, as defined in 18-8-202, organized under the laws of Montana and not operating for profit, and that are used and operated by officials and employees in the line of duty and for vehicles on loan from the United States government or the state of Montana to, or owned by, the civil air patrol and used and operated by officials and employees in the line of duty, there

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must be placed on the number plates assigned, in a position that the department may designate, the letter "X" or the word "EXEMPT". Distinctive registration numbers for plates assigned to motor vehicles of each of the counties in the state and those of the municipalities and special districts that obtain plates within each county must begin with number one and be numbered consecutively. Because these number plates are of a permanent nature, they are subject to replacement by the department only when the physical condition of the number plates requires it and a year number may not be displayed on the number plates.

(8) Number plates issued to a passenger vehicle, truck, trailer, motorcycle, or quadricycle may be transferred only to a replacement passenger vehicle, truck, trailer, motorcycle, or quadricycle. A registration or license fee may not be assessed upon a transfer of a number plate under 61-3-317 and 61-3-335.

(9) For the purpose of this chapter, the several counties of the state are assigned numbers as follows: Silver Bow, 1; Cascade, 2; Yellowstone, 3; Missoula, 4; Lewis and Clark, 5; Gallatin, 6; Flathead, 7; Fergus, 8; Powder River, 9; Carbon, 10; Phillips, 11; Hill, 12; Ravalli, 13; Custer, 14; Lake, 15; Dawson, 16; Roosevelt, 17; Beaverhead, 18; Chouteau, 19; Valley, 20; Toole, 21; Big Horn, 22; Musselshell, 23; Blaine, 24; Madison, 25; Pondera, 26; Richland, 27; Powell, 28; Rosebud, 29; Deer Lodge, 30; Teton, 31; Stillwater, 32; Treasure, 33; Sheridan, 34; Sanders, 35; Judith Basin, 36; Daniels, 37; Glacier, 38; Fallon, 39; Sweet Grass, 40; McCone, 41; Carter, 42; Broadwater, 43; Wheatland, 44; Prairie, 45; Granite, 46; Meagher, 47; Liberty, 48; Park, 49; Garfield, 50; Jefferson, 51;

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Wibaux, 52; Golden Valley, 53; Mineral, 54; Petroleum, 55; Lincoln, 56. Any new counties must be assigned numbers by the department as they may be formed, beginning with the number 57.

(10) Each type of special license plate approved by the legislature, except collegiate license plates authorized in 61-3-463, must be a separate series of plates, numbered as provided in subsection (6), except that the county number must be replaced by a nonremovable design or decal designating the group or organization to which the applicant belongs. Unless otherwise specifically stated in this section, the special plates are subject to the same rules and laws as govern the issuance of regular license plates, must be placed or mounted on a vehicle owned by the person who is eligible to receive them, and must be removed upon sale or other disposition of the vehicle. The special license plates must be issued to national guard members, former prisoners of war, persons with disabilities, reservists, disabled veterans, survivors of the Pearl Harbor attack, veterans of the armed services, national guard veterans, legion of valor members, or veterans of the armed services who were awarded the purple heart medal, who comply with the following provisions:

(a) (i) An active member of the Montana national guard may be issued special license plates with a design or decal displaying the letters "NG". The adjutant general shall issue to each active member of the Montana national guard a certificate authorizing the department to issue national guard plates, numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, and the member shall surrender the plates to the department upon becoming ineligible to use them.

(ii) The department may issue national guard veteran plates,

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bearing a design or decal displaying the Montana national guard insignia and the words "National Guard veteran" and numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, to an applicant who presents to the department a copy of certification of national guard retirement eligibility issued by the appropriate authorities for the applicant or the applicant's deceased spouse and who pays, in addition to all taxes and fees required by parts 3 and 5 of this chapter, a national guard veteran license plate fee of \$10. The additional fee must be distributed in accordance with the provisions of subsection (12).

(b) An active member of the reserve armed forces of the United States of America who is a resident of this state may be issued special license plates with a design or decal displaying the following: United States army reserve, AR (symbol); United States naval reserve, NR (anchor); United States air force reserve, AFR (symbol); and United States marine corps reserve, MCR (globe and anchor). The commanding officer of each armed forces reserve unit shall issue to each eligible member of the reserve unit a certificate authorizing the issuance of special license plates, numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set. The member shall surrender the plates to the department upon becoming ineligible to use them.

(c) (i) Subject to the limitation in 61-3-435, a resident of Montana who is a veteran of the armed forces of the United States and who has been awarded the purple heart and is 50% or more disabled because of an injury that has been determined by the department of veterans affairs to be service-connected or who is 100% disabled

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because of an injury that has been determined by the department of veterans affairs to be service-connected may, upon presentation to the department of documentation required in subsection (10)(f)(i) proof of the required disability, be issued:

(A) a special license plate under this section with the purple heart decal or a design or decal displaying the letters "DV"; or

(B) one set of any other military-related plates that the 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart or the disabled veteran is eligible to receive under this section.

(ii) The fee for original or renewal registration by a 100% disabled veteran for a motor vehicle, as defined in 61-1-102, that is not used for commercial purposes is \$5 and is in lieu of all other fees and taxes for that vehicle under this chapter irrespective of which set of military license plates the veteran is eligible to receive and chooses to display under subsection (10)(c)(i). Special license plates issued to a 100% disabled veteran under this section may be retained by the veterans' surviving spouse, provided the spouse does not remarry, for the \$5 registration fee provided for in this subsection (10)(c)(iii) and is in lieu of all other fees and taxes for that vehicle under this chapter.

(iii) The fee for original or renewal registration for a motor vehicle, as defined in 61-1-102, that is not used for commercial purposes by a 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart and who meets the criteria in subsection (10)(c)(i) is \$5 and is in lieu of other taxes and fees for that vehicle under this chapter, except for the \$10 fee required in subsection (10)(f)(iii), regardless of which set of military license plates the veteran is

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eligible to receive and chooses to display under subsection (10)(c)(i). Special license plates issued to a 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart under subsection (10)(c) may be retained by a surviving spouse, subject to payment of all taxes and fees required under parts 3 and 4 of this chapter as provided in subsection (10)(f)(iii).

(iv) Special license plates issued to a disabled veteran and, except as provided in subsection (10)(c)(iii), to a 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart are not transferable to another person.

(v) A 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart or a disabled veteran is not entitled to a special license plate for more than one vehicle.

(vi) A vehicle that is lawfully displaying a disabled veteran's plate with a design or decal displaying the letters "DV" and that is conveying a 100% disabled veteran is entitled to the parking privileges allowed a person with a disability's vehicle under this title.

(d) (i) A Montana resident who is a veteran of the armed forces of the United States and was captured and held prisoner by a military force of a foreign nation, documented by the veteran's service record, may upon application and presentation of proof be issued special license plates, numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, with a design or decal displaying the words "ex-prisoner of war" or an abbreviation that the department considers appropriate.

(ii) Fees required under 61-3-321(1) and (6) may not be

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assessed upon one set of license plates issued to an ex-prisoner of war under this subsection (10)(d).

(iii) A special license plate fee may not be assessed upon one set of special license plates issued to an ex-prisoner of war under this subsection (10)(d).

(iv) An ex-prisoner of war is exempt from the registration fees imposed under 61-3-560 through 61-3-562 for one vehicle that displays a set of ex-prisoner of war license plates.

(v) A surviving spouse of an ex-prisoner of war may retain the special license plates that have been issued to the ex-prisoner of war if the spouse complies with the provisions of 61-3-457.

(e) Except as provided in subsections (10)(c) and (10)(d), upon payment of all taxes and fees required by parts 3 and 5 of this chapter and upon furnishing proof satisfactory to the department that the applicant meets the requirements of this subsection (10)(e), the department shall issue to a Montana resident who is a veteran of the armed services of the United States special license plates, numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, designed to indicate that the applicant is a survivor of the Pearl Harbor attack if the applicant was a member of the United States armed forces on December 7, 1941, was on station on December 7, 1941, during the hours of 7:55 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. (Hawaii time) at Pearl Harbor, the island of Oahu, or was offshore at a distance of not more than 3 miles, and received an honorable discharge from the United States armed forces. If special license plates issued under subsection (10)(d) and this subsection are lost, stolen, or mutilated, the recipient of the plates is entitled to replacement plates upon

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request and without charge.

(f) A motor vehicle owner and resident of this state who is a veteran or the surviving spouse of a veteran of the armed services of the United States may be issued license plates inscribed as provided in subsection (10)(f)(i) if the veteran was separated from the armed services under other than dishonorable circumstances or was awarded the purple heart medal:

(i) Upon submission of a department of defense form 214(DD-214) or its successor or documents showing an other-than-dishonorable discharge or a reenlistment, proper identification, and other relevant documents to show an applicant's qualification under this subsection, there must be issued to the applicant, in lieu of the regular license plates prescribed by law, special license plates numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set. The plates must display:

(A) the word "VETERAN" and a symbol signifying the United States army, United States navy, United States air force, United States marine corps, or United States coast guard, according to the record of service verified in the application; or

(B) a symbol representing the purple heart medal.

(ii) Plates must be furnished by the department to the county treasurer, who shall issue them to a qualified veteran or to the veteran's surviving spouse. The plates must be placed or mounted on the vehicle owned by the veteran or the veteran's surviving spouse designated in the application and must be removed upon sale or other disposition of the vehicle.

(iii) Except as provided for 100% disabled veterans and

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ex-prisoners of war in subsections (10)(c) and (10)(d), a veteran or surviving spouse who receives special license plates under this subsection (10)(f) is liable for payment of all taxes and fees required under parts 3 and 4 of this chapter and a special veteran's or purple heart medal license plate fee of \$10.

(g) A Montana resident who is eligible to receive a special parking permit under 49-4-301 may, upon written application on a form prescribed by the department, be issued a special license plate with a design or decal bearing a representation of a wheelchair as the symbol of a person with a disability.

(h) The department may issue legion of valor license plates, bearing a design or decal depicting the recognized legion of valor medallion and numbered in sets of two with a different number on each set, to an applicant who presents to the department proper documentation of receipt of a legion of valor award by appropriate authorities to the applicant or the applicant's deceased spouse and who pays all taxes and fees required by parts 3 and 5 of this chapter.

(i) An active member of the armed forces of the United States who is a resident of the state or who is stationed outside of Montana may be issued special license plates inscribed as provided in subsection (10)(f)(i)(A). The member's commanding officer may issue a certificate or some other relevant document to show the applicant's qualification and authorizing the issuance of the special license plates in sets of two with a different number on each set. The member is liable for payment of all taxes and fees required by this chapter, except as provided in 61-3-456.

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(11) The provisions of this section do not apply to a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer that is registered as part of a fleet, as defined in 61-3-712, and that is subject to the provisions of 61-3-711 through 61-3-733.

(12) Fees collected under this section must be deposited in the state general fund."

{ x Internal References to 61-3-332:

15-1-121	15-1-122	49-4-301	49-4-302
49-4-302	49-4-304	61-3-301	61-3-313
61-3-321	61-3-321	61-3-321	61-3-407
61-3-407	61-3-412	61-3-426	61-3-426
61-3-426	61-3-426	61-3-426	61-3-426
61-3-446	61-3-446	61-3-452	61-3-453
61-3-453	61-3-454	61-3-455	61-3-457
61-3-457	61-3-463	61-3-463	61-3-474
61-3-474	61-3-479	61-3-560	61-3-560
61-3-562	61-4-102}		

**Section 3.** Section 61-3-560, MCA, is amended to read:

**"61-3-560. Light vehicle registration fee -- exemptions -- 24-month registration.** (1) Except as provided in subsections (2) and (3), there is a registration fee imposed on light vehicles. The registration fee is in addition to other annual registration fees.

(2) The following vehicles are exempt from the fee imposed in subsection (1):

(a) light vehicles that meet the description of property exempt from taxation under 15-6-201(1)(a), (1)(c) through (1)(e), (1)(g), (1)(m), (1)(o), (1)(q), or (1)(w), 15-6-203, or 15-6-215, except as provided in 61-3-520;

(b) a light vehicle owned by a 100% disabled veteran or by a 50% or more disabled veteran who has been awarded the purple heart qualifying for one set of special license plates under

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61-3-332(10)(c) or 61-3-426;

(c) a light vehicle owned by an ex-prisoner of war qualifying for one set of special plates under 61-3-332(10)(d) or a surviving spouse of an ex-prisoner of war under 61-3-457;

(d) a light vehicle owned by the surviving spouse of a veteran who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-connected disability provided that the spouse does not remarry; and

~~(d)~~(e) a light vehicle registered under 61-3-456.

(3) A dealer for light vehicles is not required to pay the registration fee for light vehicles that constitute inventory of the dealership and that are reported under 61-3-501.

(4) The owner of a light vehicle subject to the provisions of 61-3-313 through 61-3-316 may register the light vehicle for a period not to exceed 24 months. The application for registration or reregistration must be accompanied by the registration fee and all other fees required in this chapter for each 12-month period of the 24-month period. However, the registration fees required under 61-3-321(1)(a) or (1)(b) paid at the time of registration or reregistration apply for the entire 24-month registration period."

{ x Internal References to 61-3-560:

15-6-215	15-8-202*	15-24-301	15-24-301
15-30-121*	15-50-207*	20-9-331*	20-9-333*
20-9-360*	61-3-101*	61-3-303*	61-3-303*
61-3-315	61-3-315	61-3-332	61-3-332*
61-3-332*	61-3-332	61-3-332	61-3-332
61-3-456*	61-3-457*	61-3-506*	61-3-520
61-3-537*	61-3-537*	61-3-537*	61-3-537*
61-3-537*	61-3-537*	61-3-561	61-3-561
61-3-701	61-3-736}		

NEW SECTION. **Section 4. {standard} Effective date.** [This act]

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is effective July 1, 2003.

- END -

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