

House Bill 2655

Sponsored by Representative P SMITH (at the request of Keep Oregon Green)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Allows Department of Transportation to issue group plate for group that promotes prevention and suppression of wildfires. Directs department to seek federal approval of use of image of Smokey Bear on group plates.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to group registration plates; creating new provisions; and amending ORS 805.205 and
3 805.206.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1.** ORS 805.205 is amended to read:

6 805.205. (1) The Department of Transportation by rule shall provide for issuance of registration
7 plates described in subsection (3) of this section for nonprofit groups meeting the qualifications for
8 tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, **for groups promoting the**
9 **prevention and suppression of wildfires**, for institutions of higher education and for veterans'
10 organizations. The department shall also provide, upon request from a veterans' group or the Di-
11 rector of Veterans' Affairs, for issuance of a veterans' recognition registration plate that may be
12 issued only to veterans. Plates issued under this section may be issued to owners of motor vehicles
13 registered under the provisions of ORS 803.420 (1). Plates issued under this section may not contain
14 expressions of political opinion or religious belief. Rules adopted under this section shall include,
15 but need not be limited to, rules that:

16 (a) Describe general qualifications to be met by any group in order to be eligible for plates is-
17 sued under this section.

18 (b) Specify circumstances under which the department may cease to issue plates for any partic-
19 ular group.

20 (c) Require each group for which plates are issued, other than a group or the Director of Vet-
21 erans' Affairs requesting a veterans' recognition plate, to file an annual statement on a form de-
22 signed by the department showing that the group is a nonprofit group, **promotes the prevention**
23 **and suppression of wildfires** or **is** an institution of higher education and **that the group** otherwise
24 meets the qualifications imposed for eligibility for plates issued under this section. The statement
25 shall include names and addresses of current directors or officers of the group or of other persons
26 authorized to speak for the group or institution on matters affecting plates issued under this section.

27 (d) Require proof of veteran status for issuance of a veterans' recognition plate and specify what
28 constitutes proof.

29 (2)(a) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection, in addition to any other
30 fee authorized by law, upon issuance of a plate under this section and upon renewal of registration
31 for a vehicle that has plates issued under this section, the department shall collect a surcharge of

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 \$2.50 per plate for each year of the registration period.

2 (b) In addition to any other fee authorized by law, upon issuance of a plate under this section
 3 **[that] for a group that promotes the prevention and suppression of wildfires or that** recognizes
 4 an institution of higher education in this state, and upon renewal of registration for a vehicle that
 5 has such plates, the department shall collect a surcharge of \$8 per plate for each year of the reg-
 6 istration period.

7 (3) Plates issued under this section shall be from the current regular issue of plates except that:

8 (a) In consultation with the group or the Director of Veterans' Affairs requesting the plates, the
 9 department shall add words to the plate that name or describe the group or veterans recognized.

10 (b) If the group or the Director of Veterans' Affairs requesting the plates represents persons
 11 who have been awarded the Purple Heart medal, the plates shall contain an image of the medal.

12 (c) If the group requesting the plates is an institution of higher education, the plates shall, upon
 13 request, contain words that indicate the plates are issued to recognize the institution or shall con-
 14 tain the institution's logo or an image of the institution's mascot.

15 **(d) If the group requesting the plates promotes the prevention and suppression of**
 16 **wildfires, the plates shall contain words and images that promote the education of the public**
 17 **in the prevention and suppression of wildfires in Oregon.**

18 (4) Except as otherwise required by the design chosen, the plates shall comply with the re-
 19 quirements of ORS 803.535. The department shall determine how many sets of plates shall be man-
 20 ufactured for each group approved under this section or for the Director of Veterans' Affairs. If the
 21 department does not sell or issue renewal for 500 sets of plates for a particular group or for the
 22 Director of Veterans' Affairs in any one year, the department shall cease production of those plates.
 23 **For the purpose of this subsection, all groups that promote the prevention and suppression**
 24 **of wildfires shall be counted as one group.**

25 (5) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (6) of this section, each group that is found by
 26 the department to be eligible for plates issued under this section may designate an account into
 27 which the net proceeds of the surcharge collected by the department under subsection (2) of this
 28 section are to be deposited. The department shall keep accurate records of the number of plates is-
 29 sued for each group that qualifies. After payment of administrative expenses of the department,
 30 moneys collected under this section for each group shall be deposited by the department into an
 31 account specified by that group. If any group does not specify an account for the moneys collected
 32 from the sale of plates issued under this section, the department shall deposit moneys collected for
 33 those plates into the Environmental Quality Information Account established under ORS 802.100 to
 34 be used as other moneys in the account are used. Deposits under this subsection shall be made at
 35 least quarterly.

36 (6)(a) Each institution of higher education that requests a plate under this section shall desig-
 37 nate an account in the general fund of the institution, and the proceeds in the account shall be used
 38 for the purpose of academic enrichment at the institution.

39 (b) Net proceeds of the surcharge collected by the department for the veterans' recognition plate
 40 shall be deposited in the trust fund established under ORS 406.050 for paying the expenses of oper-
 41 ating the Oregon Veterans' Home. Deposits under this paragraph shall be made at least quarterly.

42 **(c) Net proceeds of the surcharge collected by the department for a group that promotes**
 43 **the prevention and suppression of wildfires shall be deposited in an account designated by**
 44 **the Keep Oregon Green Association, or any successor organization, and shall be used for**
 45 **paying the expenses of promoting wildfire prevention and suppression in Oregon. Deposits**

1 **under this paragraph shall be made at least quarterly. If the Keep Oregon Green Association**
2 **ceases to exist, the Director of Transportation by rule shall designate a nonprofit group that**
3 **promotes wildfire prevention and suppression to receive the funds under this paragraph.**

4 **SECTION 2.** ORS 805.206 is amended to read:

5 805.206. (1) A group, institution or organization that requests issuance of a plate under ORS
6 805.205 shall pay to the Department of Transportation an application fee of \$10,000 in addition to
7 all of the department's anticipated costs of adding the group to the program. **For purposes of this**
8 **subsection, all groups that promote the prevention and suppression of wildfires shall be**
9 **counted as one group.** The department may not begin creating or issuing the plates until the ap-
10 plication fee and anticipated costs are paid. If 1,000 sets of the plates are purchased in the first 12
11 months that the plates are available, the department shall refund the application fee. For purposes
12 of this section, costs of adding a new group include, but are not limited to, computer programming
13 costs and vendor set-up fees.

14 (2) If the Director of Veterans' Affairs requests issuance of a plate under ORS 805.205, the di-
15 rector shall pay to the department the application fee and all of the department's anticipated costs
16 of issuance of the plate from grants, donations and gifts accepted by the Director of Veterans' Af-
17 fairs under ORS 406.050 that are expendable for the purpose of issuance of a veterans' recognition
18 registration plate.

19 **SECTION 3.** **The Department of Transportation, in collaboration with the State Forestry**
20 **Department and the Keep Oregon Green Association, shall apply to the federal government**
21 **for permission to use the image of Smokey Bear on registration plates for groups that pro-**
22 **mot the prevention and suppression of wildfires.**

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