

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 3481

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 9, 2023

The Senate Transportation Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 3481.

As amended and reported, this bill authorizes the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (commission) to issue special Woman Veteran license plates. The license plate is to display the words, “Woman Veteran,” along with the registration number and other markings or identification otherwise prescribed by law. An application to obtain a Woman Veteran license plate is to include satisfactory proof that the applicant is a veteran as evidenced by the applicant’s DD-214 form or on a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty.

In addition to the required motor vehicle registration fees, there is an application fee of \$50 and an annual renewal fee of \$10 for the Woman Veteran license plates. After deducting the cost to implement the Woman Veteran license plate program, the additional fees collected will be deposited into the “Woman Veteran License Plate Fund” and the funds will be appropriated annually to the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans’ Affairs (department) for programs to benefit female veterans, including grants for the provision of shelter to homeless female veterans.

The Chief Administrator of the commission is required to annually certify the average cost of producing, issuing, renewing, and publicizing the availability of the specialty license plates. If the average cost per plate exceeds \$50 in two consecutive fiscal years, the chief administrator may discontinue the Woman Veteran license plate program. The bill also requires that the Adjutant General of the department appoint a liaison to represent the department in all communications with the commission regarding the Woman Veteran license plates.

The bill provides that State or other public funds may not be used by the commission for the initial cost to implement the Woman Veteran license plate program. The bill requires an individual or entity designated by the department to contribute non-public monies, not to exceed \$25,000, to offset the initial costs to design, produce, issue, and publicize the license plates and of any computer programming needed

to implement the program. The bill authorizes the department to receive funds from private sources to be used to offset the initial costs.

The chief administrator is not required to design, produce, issue, or publicize the availability of the Woman Veteran license plates or make any necessary programming changes, until: (1) an individual or entity designated by the department has provided the commission with the money necessary to offset the initial costs incurred by the commission in establishing the Woman Veteran license plate program; and (2) the department's liaison has provided the commission with a minimum of 500 completed applications for the Woman Veteran license plates, upon the availability for purchase of those license plates.

The provisions of the bill will remain inoperative until the appropriate applications and fees required to offset the initial costs incurred by the commission are provided to the commission. The bill expires 12 months after the date of enactment if sufficient applications and fees to offset the initial costs are not received.

The committee amended the bill to:

- provide that monies deposited into the "Woman Veteran License Plate Fund" and appropriated annually to the department will be used for programs that benefit female veterans, including grants for the provision of shelter to homeless female veterans; and
- make a technical change to correct a reference to the department.