



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

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DATE: March 7, 2017

TO: Senate Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

FROM: Amy Joyce, Legislative Liaison

SUBJECT: SB 796, Wounded Warrior Parking Permits

INTRODUCTION

Senate Bill 796 directs the issuance of a Wounded Warrior Parking permit for military veterans with 50% or more service-connected disability. Depending on the direction of the legislature, the implementation will be less or more susceptible to fraud, and correspondingly less or more expensive to deliver.

DISCUSSION

ODOT's Driver and Motor Vehicle Services Division (DMV) issues parking permits for people with disabilities, which grant certain privileges. Under current law a standard placard allows parking in a spot designated for disabled persons, unless designated for wheelchair users only. A "wheelchair user" permit grants that, as well as parking in a time-limited spot for greater than the time allowed on the sign, and free parking at a metered spot. Local jurisdictions also may, at their discretion, allow those additional privileges to holders of standard placards.

The bill would create a new type of permit for Oregon Wounded Warriors. The permit would be available to military veterans who qualify for a disabled person parking permit, who also have at least 50% service-connected disability. The parking benefits would be almost the same as the "wheelchair user" permit, except that parking in a spot designated for wheelchair users only would not be available.

If passed, DMV could implement this bill in two different ways, each with pros and cons. The usual way would be to create a new permit type that could be noted in a person's driver record. When the Wounded Warrior permit is issued, that fact would be included in the record. Law enforcement or DMV would be able to verify that a particular person had this type of permit. The benefit to this is fraud prevention. The downside is that the programming is expensive, and not eligible for Highway Funds to pay for it. The other option would be to code the Wounded Warrior permit as a disabled person parking permit in the system. The designation would be on the placard itself (e.g. new check-box on the placard, or a sticker to be affixed), but nothing in the system could be checked to verify it. The benefit is the low cost. The down-side is the risk of fraud, for the sake of free parking, by those who do not qualify.

DMV looks to the legislature for guidance on the preferred method, should the bill become law.

SUMMARY

The Wounded Warrior parking placard would grant an enhanced parking benefit to those veterans who qualify. If passed, DMV could implement in two different ways. Each way has benefits and draw-backs, so the agency seeks guidance on the preferred method.