

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Transportation Committee

BILL: SB 900

INTRODUCER: Senator Bennett

SUBJECT: Specialty License Plates

DATE: March 24, 2011

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Davis	Spalla	TR	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
2.	_____	_____	BC	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

**I. Summary:**

This bill creates the “Combat Infantry Badge” special license plate. Such plates may be issued to recipients of the Combat Infantry Badge upon application, accompanied by proof of membership in the Combat Infantryman’s Association, Inc., or other proof of being a recipient of the Combat Infantry Badge, and payment of the vehicle license tax.

This bill substantially amends section 320.089, Florida Statutes.

**II. Present Situation:**

“Specialty license plates” are available to any owner or lessee of a motor vehicle who is willing to pay an annual fee for the privilege. Annual use fees ranging from \$15 to \$25, paid in addition to required license taxes and service fees, are distributed to an organization or organizations in support of a particular cause or charity signified in the plate’s design and designated in statute.<sup>1</sup>

However, special license plates are issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to those who meet certain qualifying criteria and include the National Guard, U. S. Armed Forces Reserves, Ex-POW, Pearl Harbor Survivor, Combat-wounded Veteran, Purple Heart Recipient, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom plates. License taxes for these special plates, excluding the Pearl Harbor Survivor, Purple Heart, and Ex-POW plates under certain circumstances, are the same as any other motor vehicle plate as prescribed in s. 320.08, F.S.

<sup>1</sup> Sections 320.08056 and 320.08058, F.S.

The first \$100,000 of revenues from the sales of these special plates are deposited into the Grants and Donations Trust Fund under the Veterans' Nursing Homes of Florida Act. Any additional revenues are deposited into the State Homes for Veterans Trust Fund and used to construct, operate, and maintain domiciliary and nursing homes for veterans.

The Combat Infantryman Badge is the U.S. Army combat service recognition decoration awarded to soldiers—enlisted men and officers (commissioned and warrant) holding colonel rank or below, who personally fought in active ground combat while an assigned member of either an infantry or a Special Forces unit, of brigade size or smaller, any time after December 6 1941.<sup>2</sup> The Combat Infantryman Badge and its non-combat analogue, the infantry skill-recognition Expert Infantryman Badge were simultaneously created during World War II as primary recognition of the combat service and sacrifices of the infantrymen who would likely be wounded or killed in numbers disproportionate to those of soldiers from the Army's other service branches.<sup>3</sup>

Combat Infantryman Badge recipients must have met the following criteria to have been awarded this honor as provided by the Military Awards Army Regulation 600-8-22:

- Be an infantryman satisfactorily performing infantry duties.
- Assigned to an infantry unit during such time as the unit is engaged in active ground combat.
- Actively participate in such ground combat. Campaign or battle credit alone is not sufficient for the award of the Combat Infantry Badge.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill creates the "Combat Infantry Badge" special license plate. This bill requires the manufacture and issuance of a special license plate stamped with the words "Combat Infantry Badge" to any recipient of the Combat Infantry Badge, who applies for the special license plate, pays the applicable license taxes provided in s. 320.08, F.S., and provides proof of membership in the Combat Infantrymen's Association, Inc., or other acceptable proof of being a Combat Infantry Badge recipient.

### IV. Constitutional Issues:

#### A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

#### B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Combat\\_Infantryman\\_Badge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Combat_Infantryman_Badge)

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Persons who are eligible to purchase a “Combat Infantry Badge” special license plate created by the bill will be required to pay applicable taxes as provided in s. 320.08, F.S.

C. Government Sector Impact:

According to DHSMV, costs to produce the “Combat Infantry Badge” special plate are minimal and can be absorbed within existing resources.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

The DHSMV requests the effective date of the bill be changed to October 1, 2011, to allow PRIDE sufficient time to develop a prototype license plate.<sup>4</sup>

**VIII. Additional Information:**

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill’s introducer or the Florida Senate.

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<sup>4</sup> Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, *Agency Bill Analysis: SB 900*, (on file with the Senate Transportation Committee).