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An Act To Establish a Special License Plate To Honor Maine Residents Serving Our Country

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, Maine residents serving in conflicts throughout the world need our support; and

Whereas, the need to support our troops and assist their families is urgent and important; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §12004-I, sub-§84-A is enacted to read:

84-A.

		Not	29-A MRSA
		Authorized	§456-D
<u>Transportation:</u>	<u>We Support</u>		
<u>Motor Vehicles</u>	<u>Our Troops Advisory</u>		
	<u>Board</u>		

Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §456-D is enacted to read:

§ 456-D. We Support Our Troops registration plates

Beginning November 1, 2007, the Secretary of State shall issue registration plates, referred to in this section as “We Support Our Troops plates,” to support Maine troops and their families in accordance with this section and section 468 except that, for the purposes of this section, the requirement for the list of 2,000 names of supporters as required by section 468, subsection 2 is waived. We Support Our Troops plates are not required for registration of a motor vehicle but are to allow citizens to participate in voluntarily funding special programs to assist the Maine families of troops.

1. We Support Our Troops plates. The Secretary of State, upon receiving an application and evidence of payment of the excise tax required by Title 36, section 1482, the registration fee required by section 501 and the administrative fee and contribution provided for in subsection 2, shall issue a registration certificate and a set of We Support Our Troops plates to be used in lieu of regular registration plates. These plates must bear identification numbers and letters.

2. Administrative fee and contribution to special programs. A person may contribute funds to the Secretary of State for the purposes of providing financial assistance to members of the Maine National Guard and their families or residents of the State who are members of the Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States and their families for emergencies and other special needs by applying for the We Support Our Troops plates and submitting, in addition to the regular motor vehicle registration fee required under section 501, a sum of \$20 credited as follows:

- A. Ten dollars to the Secretary of State for use in accordance with subsection 5; and
- B. Ten dollars to the Specialty License Plate Fund established in section 469 for administrative and production costs.

3. Renewal fee. In addition to the regular motor vehicle registration fee required under section 501, the annual renewal contribution for We Support Our Troops plates is \$15, which must be deposited with the Treasurer of State and credited as follows:

- A. Ten dollars to the Secretary of State for use in accordance with subsection 5; and
- B. Five dollars to the Specialty License Plate Fund established in section 469 for administrative and production costs.

4. Design. A sponsor must submit a design for the We Support Our Troops plates to the Secretary of State for approval or modification in accordance with section 468, subsection 5. The design must include the shape of the boundaries of the State of Maine, with an image of a curled ribbon superimposed over the shape of the State, with the words “We Support Our Troops” at the bottom of the plate.

5. Administration of fees. The Secretary of State monthly shall deposit all funds collected under subsection 2, paragraph A and subsection 3, paragraph A in the Maine National Guard Foundation Fund Special Revenue Funds account in the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management and referred to in this subsection as “the fund.” Revenue in the fund must be used to provide financial assistance to members of the Maine National Guard, residents of the State who are members of the Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States and the families of those members of the Maine National Guard or Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States for emergencies and other special needs as determined by the We Support Our Troops Advisory Board established in Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 84-A.

6. We Support Our Troops Advisory Board. The We Support Our Troops Advisory Board, as established by Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 84-A, consists of 9 members. Membership of the advisory board is as follows:

- A. Six members appointed by the Governor, in consultation with the Adjutant General of the State of Maine, as follows:

(1) Two persons, each representing the interests of the Maine National Guard;

(2) Two persons, each representing the interests of Maine residents in the Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States; and

(3) Two persons representing the interests of the public;

B. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate;

C. One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and

D. The Adjutant General of the State of Maine.

The board shall determine the use of the revenue in the Maine National Guard Foundation Fund Special Revenue Funds account in the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management. Revenue in the fund must be used to provide financial assistance in the form of loans or grants to members of the Maine National Guard, residents of the State who are members of the Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States and the families of those members of the Maine National Guard or Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States for emergencies and other special needs.

The board shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over transportation matters by June 30th of each year. The report must provide a detailed account of funds for each fiscal year and include the number of loans and grants awarded, the names of those who received loans and grant money, a description of the process for awarding loans and grants and the total amount of loan and grant money awarded.

Sec. 3. Protection of design of plates. The Secretary of State shall copyright the design of the registration plate established pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 29-A, section 456-D and make the design available for a fee to other states interested in establishing this specialty license plate.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This bill authorizes the issuance of a special registration plate to raise funds for members of the Maine National Guard and their families and residents of the State who are members of the Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States and their families. The bill establishes the We Support Our Troops Advisory Board and directs the board to determine the appropriate use of the revenue generated by the special registration plate and distribute the funds in the form of loans or grants to members of the Maine National Guard and their families and residents of the State who are members of the Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States and their families.

The bill also directs the Secretary of State to copyright the design of this plate and offer the design to other states for a fee.