

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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128th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2017

Legislative Document

No. 444

S.P. 146

In Senate, February 7, 2017

**An Act To Increase the Maximum Registered Gross Weight Allowed
for Vehicles with Disabled Veterans or Special Veterans
Registration Plates**

Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather J.R. Priest".

HEATHER J.R. PRIEST
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by President THIBODEAU of Waldo.
Cosponsored by Representative GILLWAY of Searsport and
Senators: COLLINS of York, DIAMOND of Cumberland, MASON of Androscoggin, ROSEN
of Hancock, Representatives: FARRIN of Norridgewock, GOLDEN of Lewiston,
HANINGTON of Lincoln, WHITE of Washburn.

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

2 **Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §523, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 2007, c. 383, §14, is
3 further amended to read:

4 **2. Disabled veterans; special free license plates.** The Secretary of State, on
5 application and upon evidence of payment of the excise tax required by Title 36, section
6 1482, shall issue a registration certificate and set of special designating plates to be used
7 in lieu of regular registration plates for a vehicle with a registered gross weight of not
8 more than ~~40,000~~ 26,000 pounds to any 100% disabled veteran when that application is
9 accompanied by certification from the United States Veterans Administration or any
10 branch of the United States Armed Forces as to the veteran's permanent disability and
11 receipt of 100% service-connected benefits. A disability placard is issued in addition to
12 the disabled veteran registration plate at no fee.

13 These special designating plates must bear the words "Disabled Veteran," which indicate
14 that the vehicle is owned by a disabled veteran.

15 **Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §523, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2009, c. 80, §1, is further
16 amended to read:

17 **3. Special veterans registration plates.** The Secretary of State, on application and
18 evidence of payment of the excise tax required by Title 36, section 1482 and the
19 registration fee required by section 501 or by section 504, subsection 1 for a vehicle with
20 a registered gross weight over 10,000 pounds, shall issue a registration certificate and a
21 set of special veterans registration plates to be used in lieu of regular registration plates
22 for a vehicle with a registered gross weight of not more than ~~40,000~~ 26,000 pounds to any
23 person who has served in the United States Armed Forces and who has been honorably
24 discharged or to a person who has served in the United States Armed Forces for at least 3
25 years and continues to serve. If a person who qualifies for a special veterans registration
26 plate under this subsection is the primary driver of 3 vehicles, the Secretary of State may
27 issue in accordance with this section a set of special veterans registration plates for each
28 vehicle.

29 Each application must be accompanied by the applicant's Armed Forces Report of
30 Transfer or Discharge, DD Form 214, certification from the United States Veterans
31 Administration or the appropriate branch of the United States Armed Forces verifying the
32 applicant's military service and honorable discharge, or a letter from the Department of
33 Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services
34 verifying active duty military service and length of service.

35 The Secretary of State shall recall a special veterans registration plate of a recipient who
36 has been less than honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces.

37 All surplus revenue collected for issuance of the special registration plates is retained by
38 the Secretary of State to maintain and support this program.

39 The surviving spouse of a special veteran plate recipient issued plates in accordance with
40 this subsection may retain and display the special veteran plates as long as the surviving
41 spouse remains unmarried. Upon remarriage, the surviving spouse may not use the

1 special veteran plates on a motor vehicle, but may retain them as a keepsake. Upon the
2 death of the surviving spouse, the family may retain the special veteran plates, but may
3 not use them on a motor vehicle.

4 The Secretary of State may issue a special disability registration plate for veterans in
5 accordance with section 521, subsections 1, 5, 7 and 9. The special disability registration
6 plate for veterans must bear the International Symbol of Access.

7 The Secretary of State may issue a set of special veterans registration plates when the
8 qualifying veteran is the primary driver of a company-owned vehicle if:

9 A. The company is owned solely by a veteran who qualifies for a veteran plate under
10 this section;

11 B. The vehicle is leased by a veteran who qualifies for the veteran plate under this
12 subsection; or

13 C. The vehicle is leased by the employer of a veteran who qualifies for the veteran
14 plate and the employer has assigned the vehicle exclusively to the veteran. The
15 employer must attest in writing that the veteran will have exclusive use of the vehicle
16 and agrees to the display of the special veteran plate.

17 **SUMMARY**

18 This bill increases from 10,000 pounds to 26,000 pounds the upper registered gross
19 weight limit of vehicles that may have disabled veteran or special veterans registration
20 plates.