

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES
TESTIMONY ON H.B. No. 462, HD1, RELATING TO MILITARY SPECIAL
NUMBER PLATES

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

FEBRUARY 10, 2010

Good morning Chair Joseph Souki, Vice-Chair Karen Awana, and members of the House Committee on Transportation.

I am Mark Moses, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to support H.B. 462, HD1.

HD1 would authorize special plates for women veterans.

We support this bill, noting that about 15 percent of those serving on active duty are female and that about the same percent are members of the Reserves and National Guard. However, we defer to the agency that has direct responsibility for implementation and acquisition of veteran license plates.

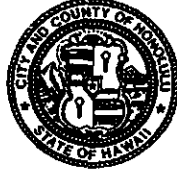
The OVS supports issuing women veteran plates provided its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Supplemental Budget for Fiscal Years 2010-2011.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of Hawaii's veteran community.

I will respond to questions from the committee.

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
CITY & COUNTY OF HONOLULU
DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLE, LICENSING AND PERMITS
ADMINISTRATION
P.O. BOX 30300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96820-0300

MUFI HANNEMANN
MAYOR



GAIL Y. HARAGUCHI
DIRECTOR

DENNIS A. KAMIMURA
LICENSING ADMINISTRATOR

February 8, 2010

The Honorable Joseph M. Souki, Chair
and Committee Members
Committee on Transportation
House of Representatives
State of Hawaii
State Capitol, Room 403
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Souki and Committee Members:

Subject: H.B. No. 462 HD1, Relating to Special Number Plates

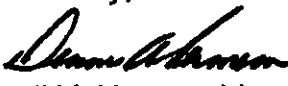

The City and County of Honolulu is opposed to H.B. No. 462 HD1 which will establish a new category of military specialty license plates.

We are concerned with the impact and proliferation of specialty license plates. This bill proposes a new license plate design recognizing women veterans. If this license plate design is approved, we feel that the Legislature will set a precedence and receive other bills requesting recognition of other worthy groups and events.

The primary purpose of license plates is to identify a vehicle in actual traffic conditions. All military specialty license plates have the numerals which Section 249-9, HRS, requires that it be not less than three inches in height and the strokes not less than three-eighths inch in width. Identity of the vehicle with military specialty requires that a person also determine the words that are printed on the left side of the plates. Currently the police officer or the public has to remember the number and ascertain whether the words written on the left side of the license plate were one of the currently eight other military specialty license plates. Due to the difficulty in identifying vehicles with specialty license plates, the International Association of Chiefs of Police has adopted a resolution opposing the continued proliferation of such license plates.

The City and County of Honolulu recommends that H.B. No. 462, HD1 be held.

Sincerely,


for  Gail Y. Haraguchi
Director

OAHU VETERANS COUNCIL

OAHU VETERANS COUNCIL
President - Fred Ballard
1st V.P. - Cecil Meadows
2nd V.P. - Jim Santos
Secretary - John Harms
Treasurer - Eugenia Woodward
Chaplain - Frank Lamson



"a gathering place for veterans"
OAHU VETERANS CENTER

OAHU VETERANS CENTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Sandy Ballard

February 8, 2010

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS
5th Regimental Combat Team
45th Infantry Division Assn.
Air Force Assn. - Chapter 138
Air Force Sergeants Association
American Legion Aux. Dept. of HI
American Legion - Dept. of HI
American Legion Post 32

American Veterans Empowerment &
Support Community Operations
BPOE VAVS Hawaii Dist.
China-Burma-India Veterans Assn.
Chosin Few - Aloha Chapter
Combat Infantrymen's Assn.
Combat Veterans Motorcycle Club
Disabled American Veterans -
Chapter 3
Fleet Reserve Association Branch
And Unit 46

Hawaii Multiple Schools Unit - Jr. ROTC
Korean War Veterans Assn -
Chapter 1

Military Officers Assn. of America -
Aloha Chapter
Military Officers Assn. of America -
Hawaii State Chapter

Military Order of the Purple Heart
Military Order of World Wars
National Assn. for Atomic Veterans
National Assn. of Uniformed Services

National Sojourners - Hawaiian # 9
National Sojourners - Honolulu # 11
National Sojourners - Kamehameha #439

Pearl Harbor Survivors Association
Radiated Veterans
Samoan Providers

Society of Military Widows -
Aloha Chapter
Sons & Daughters of

Pearl Harbor Survivors
Special Forces Assn. - Chapter VIII
State Office of Veterans Services

Veterans of Foreign Wars
Dept. of Hawaii
Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 970

Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 858
Waves National - Unit 131
Women Veterans of America #26

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF HOUSE BILL 462 HD1 RELATING TO MILITARY SPECIAL NUMBER PLATES

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

HEARING WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2010, 9:30 AM, ROOM 309

Aloha Representatives Joseph M. Souki, Chair, Representative Karen Leinani Awana, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee. My name is Fred Ballard, President Oahu Veterans Council. The Oahu Veterans Council is comprised of over 35 Oahu veteran organizations that in turn represent over 80,000 veterans and their families. The Council voted unanimously at its meeting on, January 23rd to communicate our complete support of House Bill 462.

The Oahu Veterans Council supports HB 462 HD1. Adopting HD1 would authorize special plates for women veterans. It is certainly appropriate and long over due. The percentage of women serving in uniform continues to grow each year. A license plate that recognizes their contribution is certainly appropriate.

The Oahu Veterans Council strongly supports the passage of House Bill 462 HD1.

Mahalo for allowing us the opportunity to testify in support of this very important bill.

Fred W. Ballard
Fred W. Ballard
President
Oahu Veterans Council



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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 462, H.D. 1 (for Woman Veteran plates)

Women who have served in the military are proud to have contributed to the safety and security of their country. It has only been since the early 1970s that we have been acknowledged as full members of the armed forces. Before that time we were recognized as members of reserve components. Not taken seriously.

Women have been a part of the military in all the conflicts from the Revolutionary War to present time. While many of us have served in the different campaigns/wars we were not always acknowledged as valuable assets. The real heroes among have been the exception rather than the rule.

The same goes for the opportunity to display our military status on license plates. It would be so easy to get a regular 'veteran plate' but then most people following our cars would probably assume that it was the male in our life who was the veteran. Understandably there should be no difference between military personnel and/or veterans. Why would we have to have our own license plate design that says "WOMAN VETERAN?" Until it becomes second nature to recognize women as veterans one way to let everyone know is by having a license plate that shows this.

I enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1957. I wasn't a Marine. I was a Woman Marine with a distinctive service number that started with a 'W' standing for Woman. Sexual harassment was common in those days and we didn't even know it. So many biased regulations were in effect. In fact, when I got married I was able to take my discharge a year early just because a regulation provided for it if I had served a year after specified training. How many men would have been able to do this? And women who got pregnant were discharged immediately. No room for

mothers in the military. Today very few remember the inequities that military women have endured.

I took my discharge and went on to have a family. Years later I was chosen for and completed an apprenticeship at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard becoming the first female journeyman pipefitter. I was the first woman to serve as a supervisor on the waterfront. Mind you not in an office but as a living breathing foreman (forewoman) supervising a gang of blue collar journeymen. It wasn't easy.

Also, after a nearly 20-year break in service and a divorce, I was back in the military when I joined the Coast Guard Reserves and went on to complete a 20-year enlistment to retire. During that time I received a national award and served as Assistant to the Coast Guard's Women's Policy Advisor working toward the retention of Coast Guard women whose status along with women in other services was still a long way from equal.

One of my daughters also enlisted in the Coast Guard Reserve. She was activated from our reserve unit during Desert Storm. She converted to active duty and has served since that time. Thanks to changes in regulations over the years she has been able to have her family and her military career at the same time. It is unfortunate that women are still working toward equality. It is unfortunate that a 'veteran's plate' on a vehicle conjures up a subconscious assumption that the owner is male. Society being what it is it may take a few more years. Until then it would be really good if military women could have their own designator that lets everyone know that they too have served proudly.

Port Security Chief Maxine Cavanaugh USCG (retired)