AN ACT

Relating to a veteran's designation on an identification card or a driver's license for Hmong veterans and Lao veterans; relating to registration plates celebrating the arts; relating to special motor vehicle registration plates for recipients of the Bronze Star awarded for valor, Silver Star, Navy Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Air Force Cross, Coast Guard Cross, and other awards reflecting valor; relating to special registration plates for vehicles owned by veterans with disabilities; and providing for an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

THE ACT FOLLOWS ON PAGE 1
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* Section 1. AS 18.65.310(l) is amended to read:

(l) At the request of the person, the department shall provide a veteran designation and United States flag replica on an identification card identifying the person as a retired veteran, or a Hmong veteran or Lao veteran who discharged under honorable conditions.
served in military operations in support of the United States in the Kingdom of Laos between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975. The department may not charge a fee solely for the designation. To receive a veteran designation, the person shall provide proof of veteran status that shows the person is retired, was discharged under honorable conditions, or is a Hmong veteran or Lao veteran. The department shall consult with the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to determine the proof necessary to show that a person is a Hmong veteran or Lao veteran. With the approval of the person, the department shall make available to the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs the name and address of a person receiving a veteran designation under this subsection. Notwithstanding (a) of this section, the department may charge a fee of $5 for replacement of a valid identification card with a veteran designation.

* Sec. 2. AS 28.10.161(b) is amended to read:

(b) Every passenger vehicle registration plate, except as specifically provided in AS 28.10.181, shall have displayed on it

(1) one of the following designs: [EITHER]

(A) the Alaska flag design, consisting of the Alaska flag, the traditional colors of yellow-gold and blue, and the slogan "The Last Frontier";

[OR]

(B) the bear design, consisting of a standing grizzly bear in the center of the plate; the bear design shall be modeled after the 1976 bicentennial plate without the bicentennial symbol; or

(C) the design celebrating the arts chosen by the commissioner through consultation with the Alaska State Council on the Arts; the commissioner shall choose a new design for the plates celebrating the arts every four years and discontinue issuance of the previous design;

(2) the registration number assigned to the vehicle for which it is issued;

(3) the name of this state, which may be abbreviated; and

(4) the registration year number or expiration date for which time it is
validated; the registration year number or expiration date may be part of the license plate or contained on a suitable sticker or tab device issued by the department; however, only one sticker or tab device may be issued for each pair of plates, and the sticker or tab device must be affixed to the rear plate.

* Sec. 3. AS 28.10.181(d) is amended to read:

(d) Vehicles owned by veterans with disabilities, including persons disabled in the line of duty while serving in the Alaska Territorial Guard, or other persons with disabilities. Upon the request of a person with a disability that limits or impairs the ability to walk, as defined in 23 C.F.R. 1235.2, the department shall (1) register one motor vehicle in the name of the person without charge; and (2) issue a specially designed registration plate that displays (A) recognition of the disabled veteran if the applicant's disability originated from the applicant's service with the Alaska Territorial Guard or the armed forces of the United States; (B) the international symbol of accessibility (the wheelchair logo); and (C) if the applicant is a veteran, the Alaska and United States flags and red, white, and blue colors. A person who is not otherwise qualified under this subsection, but who meets the qualifications of a disabled veteran under AS 29.45.030(i), may register one motor vehicle without charge, and the department shall issue a specially designed registration plate that displays recognition of the disabled veteran that does not display the international symbol of accessibility and does not carry with it special parking privileges. A disabled veteran who otherwise qualifies for a registration plate under this subsection may elect to receive a plate under (p) or (q) of this section for which the person is otherwise qualified that does not display the international symbol of accessibility and does not carry with it special parking privileges. A disabled person who otherwise qualifies for a registration plate under (2)(B) of this subsection may elect to receive a plate under another provision of this section for which the person is otherwise qualified that does not display the international symbol of accessibility and does not carry with it special parking privileges. For purposes of this subsection, proof of disability may be provided by a person licensed as a chiropractor under AS 08.20, as a physician or physician assistant under AS 08.64, or as an advanced practice registered nurse under AS 08.68.
* Sec. 4. AS 28.10.181 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

  (jj) Vehicles owned by recipients of the Bronze Star awarded for valor, Silver Star, Navy Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Air Force Cross, or Coast Guard Cross. The department, upon receipt of written proof that the person is the sole or joint owner of a motor vehicle, shall issue special registration plates for the motor vehicle to a requesting person who has received the Bronze Star Medal awarded for valor, Silver Star Medal, Navy Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Air Force Cross, or Coast Guard Cross. The commissioner, after consulting with the person in the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs in charge of veterans' affairs, shall determine the design and color of the Bronze Star awarded for valor recipient plates, Silver Star recipient plates, Navy Cross recipient plates, Distinguished Service Cross recipient plates, Air Force Cross recipient plates, and Coast Guard Cross recipient plates.

  (kk) Vehicles owned by recipients of awards reflecting valor issued by the armed forces of the United States. The department, upon written proof that the person is the sole or joint owner of a motor vehicle, may issue special registration plates for the motor vehicle to a requesting person who has received an award reflecting valor issued by the armed forces of the United States other than a Purple Heart, Bronze Star awarded for valor, Silver Star, Navy Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Air Force Cross, or Coast Guard Cross. The commissioner, after consulting with the person in the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs in charge of veterans' affairs, shall determine the design and color of the award recipient plates.

* Sec. 5. AS 28.10.421(d)(2) is amended to read:

  (2) special request plates for

  (A) Alaska National Guard personnel ......................... $30;

  (B) veterans, retired veterans, or Lao veterans .............. $30;

  (C) recipients of the Purple Heart .......................... none;

  (D) recipients of the Bronze Star awarded for valor, Silver Star, Navy Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Air Force Cross, Coast Guard Cross, or other award reflecting valor .................. $30;

  (E) owners of custom collector vehicles ....................... $50;

  (F) [(E)] Iditarod race finishers .............................. $50;
(G) [(F)] other special request plates $30;
plus the fee required for that vehicle under (b) of this section; the fee required by this paragraph shall be collected only on the first issuance and on the replacement of special request plates;

* Sec. 6. AS 28.15.111(c) is amended to read:

(c) At the request of an applicant, the department shall provide a veteran designation and United States flag replica on a license identifying the driver as a retired veteran, [OR] a veteran of the armed forces of the United States discharged under honorable conditions, or a Hmong veteran or Lao veteran who served in military operations in support of the United States in the Kingdom of Laos between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975. The department may not charge a fee solely for the designation. To receive a veteran designation, the driver shall make available proof of veteran status that shows that the person is retired, was [OR] discharged under honorable conditions, or is a Hmong veteran or Lao veteran. The department shall consult with the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs to determine the proof necessary to show that a person is a Hmong veteran or Lao veteran. With the approval of the applicant, the department shall make available to the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs the name and address of a driver receiving a veteran designation under this subsection. The department may charge a fee of $5 for replacement of a valid driver's license with a new license with a veteran designation. A replacement license with a veteran designation issued for $5 under this subsection shall retain the expiration date of the license it replaces.

* Sec. 7. AS 44.27.080(a) is amended to read:

(a) The council shall hold a competition every four years to select a design for the vehicle registration [SPECIAL REQUEST] plate celebrating the arts under AS 28.10.161(b)(1)(C) [AS 28.10.181(u)]. The council shall select a panel of judges to judge the submissions for the contest and shall include the previous design winner on the panel. The panel shall select the top submissions, and the council shall conduct a public vote to determine the winner of the competition. The council shall use the winning design when consulting with the commissioner of administration under AS 28.10.161(b)(1)(C) [AS 28.10.181(u)].
* Sec. 8. AS 28.10.181(u), 28.10.421(d)(15), and AS 44.27.080(b) are repealed.

* Sec. 9. Sections 4 and 5 of this Act take effect January 1, 2019.