

## **CHAPTER 694**

**(House Bill 1425)**

AN ACT concerning

### **Vehicle Laws – Gold Star Registration Plates**

FOR the purpose of authorizing a recipient of the U.S. Department of Defense Gold Star as the surviving spouse, parent, or next of kin of a member of the armed forces whose life was lost in combat to apply under certain circumstances to the Motor Vehicle Administration for assignment of a special registration plate; requiring the surviving spouse, parent, or next of kin applying for a special Gold Star registration plate to provide certain proof to the Administration; requiring the special Gold Star registration plate to display certain information; clarifying language; and generally relating to eligibility for special vehicle registration plates.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Transportation

Section 13–619.1

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2006 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

#### **Article – Transportation**

13–619.1.

(a) (1) The owner of a motor vehicle, or a lessee of the vehicle under a lease not intended as security, or a director, officer, employee, or partner of a business entity that owns the vehicle may apply to the Administration for the assignment of a special registration number and special registration plates under this section for a vehicle included in one of the following classes:

- (i) A Class A (passenger) vehicle;
- (ii) A Class E (truck) vehicle with a one ton or less manufacturer's rated capacity;
- (iii) A Class M (multipurpose) vehicle; or
- (iv) A Class D (motorcycle) vehicle.

(2) To be eligible for a special registration **DESCRIBED** under subsection (c)(2)(i) of this section, an applicant shall provide proof that is satisfactory to the Administration that the applicant is a recipient of an individually earned, combat-related, armed forces medal.

(3) To be eligible for a special registration **DESCRIBED** under subsection (c)(2)(ii) of this section, an applicant shall provide proof that is satisfactory to the Administration that the applicant is an honorably discharged veteran of a branch of the armed forces of the United States.

**(4) TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR A SPECIAL REGISTRATION DESCRIBED UNDER SUBSECTION (C)(2)(III) OF THIS SECTION, AN APPLICANT SHALL PROVIDE PROOF THAT IS SATISFACTORY TO THE ADMINISTRATION THAT THE APPLICANT IS A RECIPIENT OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE GOLD STAR FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES, PARENTS, AND NEXT OF KIN OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN COMBAT.**

(b) (1) In addition to the annual registration fee otherwise required under this title, an owner of a vehicle assigned a special registration under this section shall pay a fee as determined by the Administration each time new registration plates are issued for the vehicle. The fee shall be calculated to recover the costs incurred by the Administration in carrying out the provisions of this section.

(2) The additional fee charged under this section shall be retained by the Administration for the purpose of recovering the Administration's costs under this section, and may not be credited to the Gasoline and Motor Vehicle Revenue Account for distribution under § 8-403 or § 8-404 of this article.

(c) Special registration plates issued under this section:

(1) May consist of any combination of letters, numerals, or both; and

(2) Shall include:

(i) **FOR REGISTRATION PLATES ISSUED FOR AN APPLICANT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (A)(2) OF THIS SECTION:**

1. An emblem or logo as authorized by the Administration that depicts the **APPLICANT'S ARMED FORCES** medal; and

2. Except on plates issued for Class D (motorcycle) vehicles, words describing the medal printed across the bottom of the plates; [or]

(ii) Words or an emblem or logo indicating that the special registration plate holder is an honorably discharged veteran of a branch of the armed forces of the United States; **OR**

**(III) AN EMBLEM OR LOGO INDICATING THAT THE REGISTRATION PLATE HOLDER IS THE RECIPIENT OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE GOLD STAR.**

(d) (1) The Administration, in consultation with the U.S. Department of Defense and appropriate representatives of the various branches of the armed forces, shall adopt regulations specifying those armed forces medals that are of the type described in subsection (a)(2) of this section and which, when awarded to an individual, qualify that individual to apply for special registration under this section.

(2) The Administration may adopt other regulations as necessary to govern the issuance of special registration numbers and special registration plates under this section.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2008.

**Approved by the Governor, May 22, 2008.**