



March 29, 2022

House Special Legislative Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Subject: House Bill 7514 (Bronze Star Medal License Plates)

Chairman Kathleen A. Fogarty et al,

The purpose of this letter is to state my support for House Bill 7514 sponsored by State Representative John G. Edwards (District 70) and co-sponsored by Chairman Samuel A. Azzinaro (District 37), State Representative Anastasia P. Williams (District 9), and State Representative Camille F. J. Vella-Wilkinson (District 21).

Given that House Bill H7811 (False Representation of Military Status) has been introduced into the House and referred to the House Judiciary Committee, I would recommend the addition of language contained in that bill. In other words, displaying Bronze Star Medal plates on a vehicle to which the registered owner, or their surviving spouse, was not eligible to do would be a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment of not more than a year, or a fine of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or both.

I would also recommend adding language that would require the applicant for a Bronze Star Medal plate to show the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) an original copy of their DD-214 which lists the Bronze Star Medal as one of their personal awards. DMV would be required to make a copy of the original DD-214 and return the original to the applicant. This would help to prevent stolen valor and ensure that only those individuals who qualify for this special plate receive it. The DMV copies of the DD-214s could be scanned and shared with the Rhode Island Office of Veteran Services (RIOVS).

I have no objection to the Bronze Star Medal plates being transferred to the surviving spouse upon the veteran's death.

I ask that you vote in favor of sending this bill to the House floor for consideration and passage by your fellow representatives.

Thank you!

Very respectfully,

Matthew Baldwin McCoy
State Adjutant (2021 – 2022)

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