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GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



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MAJOR GENERAL
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KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

BRUCE E. OLIVEIRA
BRIGADIER GENERAL (RET)
INTERIM DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA
OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES
459 PATTERSON ROAD, E-WING, ROOM 1-A103
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4495

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2731, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES FOR IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN WAR
VETERANS

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON FIN

BY
BG BRUCE E. OLIVEIRA, USA, RETIRED
INTERIM DIRECTOR OF HAWAI'I OFFICE OF VETERAN SERVICES

APRIL 1, 2024

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and members of the committee:

I am Bruce Oliveira, Interim Director of Hawai'i Office of Veterans Services, State of Hawai'i, Department of Defense.

The Department of Defense (DOD) provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB2731.

This measure, if passed, creates license plates to honor Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan Conflicts. Since both conflicts happened concurrently, many veterans in the State of Hawaii served in both theaters.

Creating a special license plate for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans is an expression of gratitude for their service in protecting, not only our state citizens, but the citizens of our nation. This plate continues our recognition of veterans from World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf War who can apply for a specialty license plate from these conflicts. The veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts have sacrificed their lives to defend the citizens of the United States. Existing law does not include special license plates for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans; therefore, this measure will create license plates to honor the veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

Eligible veterans for any of these distinctive license plates would have to show proof of eligibility from the Department of Defense or their service with a Form DD 214 or other official documentation of wartime service.

The DOD supports the intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

I thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT** on HB2731. I urge you to honor our Hawaii Veterans who have served during America's war of the 21st Century by supporting this legislation establishing this distinctive veteran license plate.

Bruce Oliveira, Bruce.e.oliveira@hawaii.gov, 808-672-1260



**IN SUPPORT OF SB 2731, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES FOR IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN WAR VETERANS**

House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at 2:30 p.m.; **Agenda #3**
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol; 415 South Beretania Street

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Military Affairs Council ("MAC") supports SB 2731, SD1, HD1 which creates license plates to honor Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

The MAC was established in 1985 when the Chamber was appointed by the State to serve as the liaison to the military. The MAC advocates on behalf of Hawaii's military, and is comprised of business leaders, academic institutions, State and County officials, members of the CODEL, community leaders, labor unions and organizations and retired U.S. flag and general officers. The MAC works to support Hawaii's location as a strategic U.S. headquarters in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region which is crucial for U.S. national and homeland security.

Specialized license plates for veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts offer a small but important way to acknowledge and honor the sacrifices made by these individuals. These conflicts have spanned decades and represent a distinct era of sacrifice by American service members.

A simple glance at a license plate reading "IRAQ VETERAN" or "AFGHANISTAN VETERAN" gives ordinary citizens a way to silently acknowledge the service of these individuals. While a small gesture, this recognition can be meaningful to those who have put themselves in harm's way for their country.

They honor the service of a specific generation of veterans, fostering a sense of camaraderie and allowing the public to show a small token of their appreciation.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support.