

Senate Bill 1034

Parking Equity for Disabled Veterans Act

Senator Jerry McNerney (SD 5)

THIS BILL

California prides itself for how it takes care of veterans, especially those who were seriously injured while defending their country or are disabled. But current California law discriminates against disabled veterans and makes it harder for them to access parking benefits than other disabled Californians.

State law is also vaguer and tougher than federal law, effectively blocking many disabled veterans from accessing disabled parking that they should qualify for.

SB 1034 ensures parity for disabled veterans seeking to obtain disabled veterans parking placards from the DMV.

ISSUE

California's law creates unfair inequities – effectively double standards for who qualifies as disabled and who does not. State law also falls short in honoring the fact that veterans served their country and are now disabled.

Current California law imposes additional roadblocks on disabled veterans that other disabled individuals do not face when accessing disabled parking. The criteria for qualifying as a disabled veteran for purposes of obtaining a Disabled Veteran (DV) license plate are more restrictive than both the standards for non-veterans seeking a Disabled Person (DP) plate and federal disability standards.

As a result, disabled veterans must meet tougher and more narrowly defined requirements than disabled non-veterans to access comparable parking benefits.

Disabled veterans can suffer from numerous ailments that create mobility issues outside the current definition such as lung disease, cardiac, arthritic, neurological, or orthopedic conditions that can easily be overlooked due to the unclear language in current law.

These inconsistencies, the lack of parity between state and federal standards, and the ambiguity in California's eligibility rules discourage eligible veterans from applying for DV plates altogether.

For many veterans, a DV license plate is not merely a parking accommodation, it is a symbol of service, sacrifice, and earned recognition. Without parity in California law, disabled veterans will continue to face barriers in accessing parking benefits to which they should be entitled.

SOLUTION

SB 1034 ensures parity for disabled veterans seeking DV plates by:

- Aligning CA's rules for who qualifies as a disabled veteran with those who qualify as a disabled non-veteran.
- Conforming CA's rules for who qualifies as a disabled veteran with federal disability law.
- Providing clear descriptions of mobility issues, making the rules easy for veterans to understand.
- Granting eligibility regardless of whether a veteran's specific mobility challenge is service connected.

SUPPORT

Department of California Disabled American Veterans (Sponsor)

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