

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1430

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Transportation

**Title:** An act relating to Washington state tree special license plates.

**Brief Description:** Creating Washington state tree special license plates.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Walkinshaw, Holy, Clibborn and McBride.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Transportation: 2/25/15, 2/26/15 [DPS].

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| <p><b>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creates the Washington State Tree special license plate.</li></ul> |
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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Farrell, Vice Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Gregerson, Harmsworth, Hayes, Kochmar, McBride, Moeller, Morris, Ortiz-Self, Pike, Riccelli, Rodne, Sells, Takko, Tarleton, Wilson, Young and Zeiger.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Shea.

**Staff:** Paul Ingiosi (786-7114).

**Background:**

The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues special vehicle license plates that may be used in lieu of standard plates. A governmental or nonprofit sponsoring organization seeking to sponsor a special plate either submits an application to the DOL or requests legislation to create the special plate. The sponsoring organization seeking to sponsor the special plate is

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required to reimburse the DOL for the costs of establishing the new special plate. There is a moratorium on the issuance of new special plates by the DOL until July 1, 2015.

For special license plates that are enacted by the Legislature, a sponsoring organization must, within 30 days of enactment, submit prepayment of all start-up costs to the DOL. If the sponsoring organization is not able to meet the prepayment requirement, revenues generated from the sale of the special license plate are first used to pay off any costs associated with establishing the new plate. The sponsoring organization must also provide a proposed license plate design to the DOL. Additionally, the sponsoring organization must submit an annual financial report to the DOL detailing actual revenues generated from the sale of the special license plate. The reports are reviewed, approved, and presented to the Joint Transportation Committee.

The DOL collects special license plate fees and, for administrative expenses, deducts an amount not to exceed \$12 for new plate issuance and \$2 for renewal. After these expenses are paid, the State Treasurer deposits the proceeds into the Motor Vehicle Account until the DOL determines the start-up costs for a special license plate are paid.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The bill creates the Washington State Tree special license plate which would recognize the state tree. In addition to all fees and taxes required to be paid upon application for a vehicle registration, a fee of \$40 would be charged for a Washington State Tree special license plate and a \$30 fee is charged for renewal of the plate.

After the costs associated with establishing the special license plates are recovered, 85 percent of the proceeds from the sale of the special license plates will go to the Arboretum Foundation to support the Washington Park Arboretum, specifically environmental education programs for children through the University of Washington Botanic Gardens, and park maintenance through the Botanic Gardens and the City of Seattle. The remaining 15 percent of the proceeds will go to the City of Spokane for maintenance of the John A. Finch Arboretum.

The bill exempts the Washington State Tree special license plate from the moratorium on new special license plates.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill corrects a drafting error in which a subsection of the underlying statute was inadvertently omitted and also changes the effective date from January 1, 2016, to January 1, 2017.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect on January 1, 2017.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Last year, the bill was overwhelmingly voted out of the House of Representatives. Funds from the sale of the special license plate would go to support the two large arboretums in our state. The Arboretum Foundation (Foundation), the private partner for the Washington Park Arboretum (Arboretum), has over 600 volunteers giving over 12,000 hours of support each year. The Foundation regularly gives over \$400,000 to the City of Seattle or the University of Washington to support the Arboretum to keep the trees healthy, hire arborists and gardeners, and provide environmental education programs in the Arboretum for local school children. The Washington State Tree license plate will provide an additional revenue stream to continue to support these types of programs for the Arboretum and give an option to the Arboretum supporters and friends to do so as well.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Walkinshaw, prime sponsor; and John Watt and Paige Miller, Arboretum Foundation.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.