

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gary Hayzlett at 1:30 P.M. on February 22, 2005 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Jerry Henry- excused

Committee staff present:

Hank Avila, Kansas Legislative Research

Bruce Kinzie, Revisor of Statutes Office

Betty Boaz, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Chris Maurich, ABATE of KS

Chuck Yunker, KS American Legion

Timothy S. Gates (written testimony only)

Kris Ailslieger, Citizen

Tom Whitaker, Ex. Dir., KS Motor Carrier Ass'n.

Representative John Grange

Others attending:

See attached list.

### **HB 2298 - Purple heart license plates, motorcycles**

Chairman Hayzlett opened the hearing on **HB 2298**. The first proponent of this bill was Chris Maurich, a retired army veteran from Wakefield, KS. (Attachment 1) Mr. Maurich said he was a lobbyist for ABATE of Kansas, Inc. as well as a veteran with twenty years active duty, a member of the American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans. He said Kansas' combat wounded war veterans, whether they operate mini-vans or motorcycles are proud of their military service and feel this legislation is a matter of courtesy, fairness and respect. He said ABATE of Kansas recognizes motorcycles as a viable means of transportation and feels that motorcyclists' that have earned the Purple Heart should be given the opportunity to receive recognition as do other motor vehicle operators.

The next proponent for **HB 2298** was Charles Yunker, Adjutant for the Kansas American Legion. (Attachment 2) He said several years ago when The American Legion joined Senator Ben Vidricksen and others to approve the issuance of Purple Heart license plates, they simply overlooked those who rode motorcycles. He said the omission was unintentional and was brought to their attention by those who ride motorcycles and who have suffered combat related wounds while serving their nation in the Armed Forces. According to Mr. Yunker **HB 2298** provides the opportunity to correct the omission by permitting qualified motorcycle enthusiasts to purchase and display their Purple Heart recipient status.

Chairman Hayzlett drew the Committee's attention to written testimony submitted by Timothy S. Gates, who due to illness was unable to attend the hearing on **HB 2298**. (Attachment 3)

There being no other proponents and no opponents Chairman Hayzlett closed the hearing on **HB 2298**.

### **HB 2310 - Military veterans license plate, decals**

The first proponent for this bill was Kris Ailslieger who said he was there as a citizen. (Attachment 4) He said while attending army reserves in the Kansas City area he noticed cars in the parking lot that if they were from Missouri and had been awarded the bronze star, the State of Missouri provided them with a distinctive license plate that indicated their bronze star award. He said after reviewing the Kansas statutes he found Kansas provides a distinctive license plate for veterans, as well as distinctive plates for winners of the Purple Heart and Medal of Honor but it provided no similar recognition of other combat awards. He said that while Kansas' distinctive license plates for veterans offer all who served honorable recognition for their service, that those who have distinguished themselves in combat deserve extra recognition. Mr. Ailslieger said not only would the growing number of combat veterans involved in our current conflict be recognized, but this bill

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will also recognize veterans from the Persian Gulf War, the Vietnam War, the Korean war, World War II and other conflicts.

The next proponent for **HB 2310** was Charles Yunker, Adjutant for the Kansas American Legion. (Attachment 5) According to Mr. Yunker, The Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, Air Force Cross and the Distinguished Flying Cross military awards are very close in merit. Meaning that each branch of service has its "Cross" metal and each carry nearly as much or more prestige as the Bronze and Silver Star awards. The main difference between all of these awards is the manner in which the recommending officer views or interprets the criteria for each and the action or performance of the individual being considered for the award. Mr. Yunker asked the Committee to consider three additions to **HB 2310** and one slight but important correction. That is, **HB 2310** refers to the Army Distinguished Service Cross as the "Distinguished Service Cross: and they feel the word "Army" should be added thereby eliminating any future doubt or confusion as to Legislative intent. They recommend the addition of the Army Combat Infantry Badge, Navy/Marine Corps Combat Action Ribbon and the Combat Medic Badge. Each signifies the recipient has been fired upon by an enemy combatant and they feel those Kansas citizens deserve recognition.

The last proponent was Chris Maurich. He did not have written testimony on this bill but spoke in support of it.

Carmen Alldritt provided neutral testimony on this bill. (Attachment 6) According to Director Alldritt, with the passage of HB 2947 in 2004, two decals are currently allowed in the upper left hand corner of the U.S. Veteran license plate, Bronze and Silver Stars. She said if **HB 2310** is passed, six decals could be available to eligible applicants; however, there is only room for two decals to be displayed on the license plate. Applicants for the new decals listed in **HB 2310** would need to choose only two decals, should they be eligible for more than two decals. She said they were advised that the Bronze and Silver Star designs as well as the Distinguished Service Cross and Distinguished Flying Cross designs, represent the highest awards spanning all branches of service.

There were no more proponents and no opponents so Chairman Hayzlett closed the hearing on **HB 2310**.

### **HB 2315 - permanent registration for technical college vehicles leased for truck driver training program**

Chairman Hayzlett introduced Tom Whitaker as the proponent for **HB 2315**. According to Mr. Whitaker (Attachment 7) **HB 2315** makes a technical change to KSA 8-1,134 which allows cities, counties and school districts to permanently register motor vehicles at a reduced cost. In 2003, the Legislature approved HB 2159 which allowed the Wichita Area Vocational School to lease 5 tractor trailers for their truck driver training program. At that time, the Wichita Area Vocational School was part of the Wichita School District. It is now no longer part of the school district and cannot continue to permanently register the tractor trailers used in their truck driving training program. **HB 2315** allows the Wichita Area Technical College to continue to be permanently registering their vehicles as they have been for the last two years.

There were no additional proponents and no opponents so the Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2315**.

### **HB 2409 - designating part of U.S. highway 54 as Veterans Memorial highway**

The Chairman recognized Representative John Grange as a proponent for **HB 2409**. (Attachment 8) Representative Grange explained that this bill will designate a portion of US Highway 54 where it enters the Kansas-Missouri border, then west to the east city limits of Kingman, as the Veterans Memorial Highway. This is a distance of 205 miles. According to Representative Grange, this designation will honor all veterans of Active, Reserve, and National Guard service regardless of theater of operation or branch of service. He said the fiscal responsibility for the signage is to be borne by gifts and donations for the signs and an additional 50% of the same costs for maintenance and replacement. He concluded by asking that this bill be passed favorably from the Committee.

There were no other proponents and no opponents so Chairman Hayzlett closed the hearing on **HB 2409**.

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The Chairman called for final action on **HB 2298**. Representative Yonally made a motion to pass this bill favorably from Committee, it was seconded by Representative Ballard and the motion carried.

The Chairman called for final action on **HB 2310**. Representative Burgess made a motion to amend this bill by adding the wording “combat medical badge, army combat infantry badge, navy/marine corps combat action ribbon, army”. This motion was seconded by Representative Olson and the motion carried to amend **HB 2310**. Representative Burgess then made a motion to pass **HB 2310, as amended**, favorably out of committee, seconded by Representative Ruiz and the motion carried.

The Chairman called for final action on **HB 2409**. Representative Humerickhouse made a motion to pass **HB 2409** favorably out of committee, seconded by Representative Jack and the motion carried.

There being no further business the Chairman adjourned the meeting. There were no future meetings scheduled at this time.