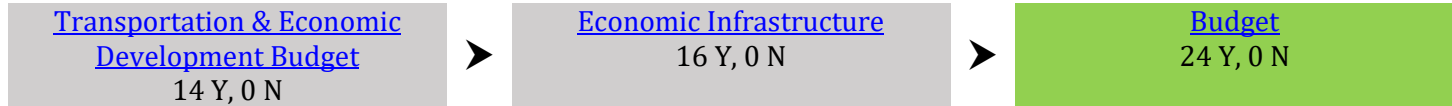


# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BILL ANALYSIS

*This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.*

<b>BILL #:</b> <a href="#">HB 313</a> <b>TITLE:</b> Toll Exemptions for Purple Heart Medal Recipients <b>SPONSOR(S):</b> Fabricio	<b>COMPANION BILL:</b> <a href="#">CS/SB 574</a> (Collins) <b>LINKED BILLS:</b> None <b>RELATED BILLS:</b> None
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## Committee References



## SUMMARY

### **Effect of the Bill:**

The bill exempts individuals driving a motor vehicle with a Purple Heart license plate from the payment of tolls.

### **Fiscal or Economic Impact:**

The bill is estimated to have a recurring negative impact of \$500,000 to the State Transportation Trust Fund and Florida Turnpike trust funds. The bill is also estimated to have a \$300,000 recurring negative impact to various local trust funds.

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## ANALYSIS

### **EFFECT OF THE BILL:**

The bill revises the eligibility for toll exemptions by providing that individuals driving a motor vehicle with a Purple Heart specialty license plate, or a motorcycle with a Purple Heart special motorcycle license plate, are exempt from the payment of tolls on toll facilities. (Section [1](#)).

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2025. (Section [2](#)).

### **FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:**

#### STATE GOVERNMENT:

The Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) met on February 14, 2025, and estimated that the bill will have a recurring negative impact of \$500,000 to the State Transportation Trust Fund and Florida Turnpike trust funds.<sup>1</sup>

The REC included in their analysis that the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Florida Summary shows that veterans (and thus Purple Heart tags) are more represented in north Florida, where there are fewer toll facilities than south and central Florida. The bill could potentially encourage more individuals to get Purple Heart tags. The impacted population group is more likely to be older, retired, or disabled, thus less likely to be driving.<sup>2</sup>

The Department of Transportation reports that there will be necessary system modifications and an indeterminate fiscal impact associated with operations, maintenance, management and billings against eligible accounts. There

<sup>1</sup> Office of Economic & Demographic Research, *Revenue Estimating Conference*, (February 14, 2025), <https://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/revenueimpact/index.cfm> (last visited March 14, 2025).

<sup>2</sup> Office of Economic & Demographic Research, *Revenue Estimating Conference*, (February 14, 2025), <https://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/revenueimpact/index.cfm> (last visited March 14, 2025).

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could also be upfront expenditures for providing transponders to recipients at no cost though this is not required under the bill.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

The REC estimates that the bill will have a recurring negative impact of \$300,000 to various local trust funds from exempting customers with Purple Heart Plates from paying tolls.<sup>3</sup>

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

### SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

#### Toll Facilities

The Florida Turnpike Mainline runs 312 miles through 11 counties in the state's peninsula, and the Turnpike Extension is 47 miles long. Florida's Turnpike System includes those two roadways along with the Sawgrass Expressway, the Seminole Expressway, the Beachline Expressway, the Southern Connector Extension of the Central Florida GreeneWay, the Veterans Expressway, the Suncoast Parkway, the Polk Parkway, the Western Beltway, the I-4 Connector and the First Coast Expressway. Highway infrastructure requires routine maintenance, updating and sometimes replacement. Tolls enable projects to be planned and built years before enough tax dollars could be collected to keep up with demand. All revenue from Florida's Turnpike System is reinvested into projects like building new highways or making improvements to existing highways on a statewide basis. Customers who use Florida's Turnpike System are charged based on the number of axles on the vehicles they drive and the distances they travel. The tolls collected generate the revenue to build, operate and maintain the roadways.<sup>4</sup>

In 2024, Florida's turnpike system generated \$1.29 billion in toll revenues.<sup>5</sup>

#### Toll Payment Exemptions

Currently, [s. 338.155, F.S.](#), provides the following exemptions from paying a toll while using a toll facility:

- Employees of the agency operating the toll facility when using the facility on official state business;
- State military personnel while on official military business;
- A person with a disability who has a valid driver license, who operates a vehicle specially equipped for use by persons with disabilities, and who is certified by a physician as being severely physically disabled and having permanent upper limb mobility or dexterity impairments that substantially impair the person's ability to deposit coins in toll baskets;
- A person exempt from toll payment by the authorizing resolution for the bonds used to finance the facility;
- A person using the facility as a temporary detour route;
- Any law enforcement officer operating an official vehicle while on official law enforcement business;
- A person operating a fire vehicle while on official business or a rescue vehicle while on official business;
- A person participating in the funeral procession of a law enforcement officer or firefighter killed in the line of duty; and
- If tolls have been suspended due to an emergency evacuation.

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<sup>3</sup> Office of Economic & Demographic Research, *Revenue Estimating Conference*, (February 14, 2025), <https://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/revenueimpact/index.cfm> (last visited March 14, 2025).

<sup>4</sup> Florida's Turnpike, *Frequently Asked Questions*, (2020), <https://floridasturnpike.com/about/frequently-asked-questions/#1552928026401-9ecfee9c-7932> (last visited March 14, 2025).

<sup>5</sup> Florida's Turnpike, *Florida's Turnpike System FY 2025 and FY 2024 Transactions and Revenue*, (2025), <https://floridasturnpike.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/FY24-Turnpike-System-Jul-May-TR.pdf> (last visited March 14, 2025).

## Purple Heart

The Purple Heart is one of the most recognized and respected medals that can be awarded to members of the U.S. Armed Forces. It is a distinguished military decoration, awarded in the name of the President, to those eligible service members who have suffered a wound as a result of enemy action.<sup>6</sup>

## Specialty License Plates

Florida offers over 100 different specialty license plates for various organizations in support of the causes they represent. The money raised from the sale of these license plates goes directly to the organization. Since the inception of specialty license plates, millions of dollars have been raised for the organizations.<sup>7</sup>

The Purple Heart specialty license plate falls within the Special Military Services category.<sup>8</sup> To be eligible for a specialty military plate, an individual can apply with the following documentation: a completed Application for Military Service Related License Plates (Form HSMV 83034) or Application for U.S. Reserve or Florida National Guard License Plate (Form HSMV 83030). Further proof of eligibility must also be provided, pursuant to [s. 320.089, F.S.](#), and individuals must pay the standard vehicle registration and license plate fee.<sup>9</sup>

[Section 320.089, F.S.](#), provides that revenues from the sale of the plate are deposited into the Operations and Maintenance Trust Fund within the Department of Veterans' Affairs and used to support program operations that benefit veterans or the operation, maintenance, or construction of domiciliary and nursing homes for veterans.

There were 9,644 Purple Heart specialty plate registrations in 2024, and 10,182 in 2023.<sup>10</sup>

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## BILL HISTORY

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
<a href="#">Transportation &amp; Economic Development Budget Subcommittee</a>	14 Y, 0 N	3/19/2025	Davis	Andeara
<a href="#">Economic Infrastructure Subcommittee</a>	16 Y, 0 N	3/25/2025	Keating	Bauldree
<a href="#">Budget Committee</a>	24 Y, 0 N	3/27/2025	Pridgeon	Andeara

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<sup>6</sup> Wounded Warrior Marines, *Purple Heart*, WWR Fact Sheet (December 11, 2017), [https://www.woundedwarrior.marines.mil/Portals/213/Docs/WWR%20Fact%20Sheets/Purple%20Heart%20Fact%20Sheet%20\(Benefit\)%20-%20Released%2012112017.pdf?ver=2017-12-12-110210-387](https://www.woundedwarrior.marines.mil/Portals/213/Docs/WWR%20Fact%20Sheets/Purple%20Heart%20Fact%20Sheet%20(Benefit)%20-%20Released%2012112017.pdf?ver=2017-12-12-110210-387) (last visited March 14, 2025).

<sup>7</sup> Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, *Personalized and Specialty License Plates*, (2025), <https://www.flhsmv.gov/motor-vehicles-tags-titles/personalized-specialty-license-plates/> (last visited March 14, 2025).

<sup>8</sup> Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, *Florida License Plates*, (February 2025), <https://www.flhsmv.gov/pdf/specialtyplates/tagbrochure.pdf> (last visited March 14, 2025).

<sup>9</sup> Florida Department of Motor Vehicles, *Special License Plates in Florida*, (2025), <https://www.dmv.org/fl-florida/special-license-plates.php> (last visited March 14, 2025).

<sup>10</sup> Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, *Florida Military License Plates*, (January 2025), [https://www.flhsmv.gov/pdf/specialtyplates/military\\_brochure.pdf](https://www.flhsmv.gov/pdf/specialtyplates/military_brochure.pdf) (last visited March 14, 2025).