



TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

P.O. BOX 500586 SAIPAN, MP 96950

**JOEL C. CAMACHO**  
CHAIRMAN

*Adopted - 9/9/2025*

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 24-29

DATE: July 25, 2025

RE: House Bill 24-23

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Capitol Hill  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations to which was referred:

**House Bill No. 24-23:** To amend 9 CMC § 2116 to update the definitions of “veteran” and “disabled veteran” and to allow a valid Veteran ID Card to be used as proof of veteran status when applying for a veteran’s license plate.

begs leave to report as follows:


### I. RECOMMENDATION:

After considerable discussion, your Committee recommends that House Bill No. 24-23 be passed by the House in its current form.

### II. ANALYSIS:

#### A. Purpose:

The purpose of H.B. 24-23 is to amend 9 CMC § 2116 to update the definitions of “veteran”

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TIME 11:02AM

and “disabled veteran” and to allow Veteran ID Cards (VIC) be used as proof of veteran status when applying for a veteran’s license plate in the CNMI.

B. Committee Findings:

Your Committee finds that under current law, veterans applying for a Veterans License Plate in the Commonwealth are required to present a DD214 Form (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty). While the DD214 has long served as the standard required document, many veterans today also possess a Veteran ID Card (VIC) issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Because the issuance of a VIC itself requires a DD214, your Committee finds that the VIC should also function as an official confirmation of veteran status. However, currently, the VIC is not recognized under Commonwealth law as a valid form of verification for obtaining a Veterans License Plate, creating unnecessary inconvenience for veterans who already hold this federally issued identification.

Additionally, in the context of defining “veteran” and “disabled veteran,” the statute currently lists individual branches of the Armed Forces by name. This approach lacks flexibility, as it necessitates legislative amendment each time a new branch is established, such as the United States Space Force.

This bill addresses both concerns. First, it allows a valid VIC to be accepted as proof of eligibility for a Veterans License Plate, giving veterans a practical and federally recognized alternative to the DD214 Form. Second, it updates the definitions of “veteran” and “disabled veteran” to explicitly cover individuals who served in any reserve component, replacing the enumerated list of military branches with a general reference to “any branch of the United States Armed Forces.”

Your Committee finds that these changes modernize and clarify the statute, reduce administrative barriers for veterans, and ensure that Commonwealth law remains adaptable to future developments related to the Armed Forces. Most importantly, this Act helps qualified veterans—whether active duty, reserve, or disabled—access the benefits and recognition they deserve.

Accordingly, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.B. 24-23 and recommends its passage in its current form.

C. Public Comments:

Public comments were solicited during your Committee’s meeting on July 25, 2025. No members of the public provided testimony or comments regarding this bill, either at that meeting or through other means.

D. Legislative History:

On April 24, 2025, Representative Julie M. A. Ogo introduced H.B. 24-23. On that same date, H.B. 24-23 was subsequently referred to the House Standing Committee on Judicial and Governmental Operations for disposition.


E. Cost Benefit:


The enactment of H.B. 24-23 will incur no extra costs for the CNMI government, as this Act allows a valid VIC to be used as proof of veteran status when applying for a veteran's license plate.

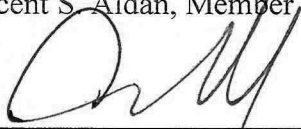
**III. CONCLUSION:**

Your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. 24-23 and recommends its passage in its current form.

Respectfully submitted,


  
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Rep. Joel C. Camacho  
Chairman

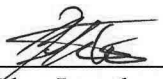
  
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Rep. Vincent S. Aldan, Member

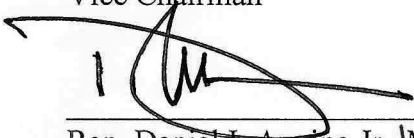
  
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Rep. Angelo A. Camacho, Member

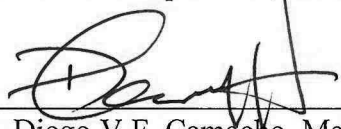
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Rep. Marissa R. Flores, Member

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Rep. Julie A. Ogo, Member

  
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Rep. Ralph N. Yumul, Member

  
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Rep. Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao  
Vice Chairman

  
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Rep. Daniel I. Aquino Jr., Member

  
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Rep. Diego V.F. Camacho, Member

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Rep. Joseph A. Flores, Member

  
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Rep. John Paul P. Sablan, Member

Reviewed by:



House Legal Counsel

Date: August 25, 2025

JEW-4/24/2025

TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH  
LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 24, 2025

1st Spc ~~Regular~~ Session, 2025

H. B. 24- 23

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To amend 9 CMC § 2116 to update the definitions of “veteran” and “disabled veteran” and to allow a valid Veteran ID Card to be used as proof of veteran status when applying for a veteran’s license plate.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE 24<sup>TH</sup> NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1           **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that the current

2 requirements for obtaining a Veterans License Plate should be amended to provide

3 veterans with additional options for proving their eligibility. While the DD214

4 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) has been the primary

5 document for verification, many veterans now possess a Veteran ID Card (VIC)

6 issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Since obtaining a VIC requires

7 a DD214, the VIC serves as official proof of veteran status and should be accepted

8 as an alternative form of veteran status verification in certain contexts. In particular,

9 the Legislature finds that the VIC should be accepted as an alternative form of

10 verification in the context of applying for a Veterans License Plate in the CNMI.

1           This bill also updates the definitions of “veteran” and “disabled veteran” to  
2 explicitly include individuals who served in a reserve component of any branch of  
3 the United States Armed Forces. Additionally, it removes the specific listing of  
4 each military branch in favor of a broader reference to the Armed Forces. This  
5 change ensures the law remains adaptable by allowing for the seamless inclusion  
6 of newly established branches, such as the United States Space Force, without  
7 requiring future legislative amendments.

8           Thus, based on the foregoing, the purpose of this Act is to amend 9 CMC  
9 § 2116 to update the definitions of “veteran” and “disabled veteran” and to allow  
10 valid VICs be used as proof of veteran status when applying for a veteran’s license  
11 plate. This amendment ensures that eligible veterans can more easily access the  
12 benefits and recognition they deserve.

13           **Section 2. Amendment.** Sections 2116(a) and 2116(b)(1) of Chapter 1,  
14 Division 2, Title 9 of the Commonwealth Code are hereby amended, with all other  
15 provisions remaining unchanged and in full force and effect, as follows:

16           **“§ 2116. Veteran or Disabled Veteran License Plates.**

17           (a) Definition.

18           (1) For purposes of this Act, the term “veteran” means a person who  
19           served ~~in active duty in the United States military service in the~~  
20           ~~Army, Navy, Marine Corp, Coast Guard, Air National Guard, or~~  
21           ~~active reserve component of the Army, Air Force, or Navy, on active~~

1 duty or in a reserve component of any branch of the United States  
2 Armed Forces and who was discharged or released under conditions  
3 other than dishonorable.

4 (2) "Disabled Veteran" means a person who served ~~in active duty in the~~  
5 ~~United States military service in the Army, Navy, Marine Corp,~~  
6 ~~Coast Guard, Air National Guard, or active reserve component of~~  
7 ~~the Army, Air Force, or Navy, on active duty or in a reserve~~  
8 component of any branch of the United States Armed Forces and  
9 who was discharged or released under conditions other than  
10 dishonorable and certified as having at least 10% disability due to  
11 service-related injury.

12 (b) Application.

13 (1) In lieu of the license plates contracted on behalf of the Bureau of  
14 Motor Vehicles, in order to qualify for a veteran's license or disabled  
15 veteran's license plate the applicant must submit the following along  
16 with the application for vehicle registration:

17 (i) ~~Copy~~ A copy of the Certificate of Release or Discharge from  
18 Active Duty from the Department of Defense (DD214); or, if a  
19 DD214 is not available, one of the following:

20 ~~(ii)(A)~~ For individuals ~~Individuals~~ otherwise qualified under  
21 subsection (a)(1); ~~of this section shall obtain~~

1                   (1) A certification from the Military and Veterans Affairs  
2                   Office, ~~provided that he/she produces documents, if~~  
3                   ~~DD214 is not available, which~~ based on  
4                   documentation submitted by the applicant to the  
5                   Military and Veterans Affairs Office that proves  
6                   ~~signifies proof that he/she served in the U.S. military~~  
7                   services; or

8                   (2) A valid Veteran Identification Card issued by the  
9                   United States Department of Veterans Affairs;

10                   ~~(iii)(B) For individuals~~ Individuals otherwise qualified under  
11                   subsection (a)(2); ~~shall obtain~~

12                   (1) A certification from the Military and Veterans Affairs  
13                   Office, ~~provided that he/she produces documents, if~~  
14                   ~~DD214 is not available, which~~ based on  
15                   documentation submitted by the applicant to the  
16                   Military and Veterans Affairs Office that proves  
17                   ~~signifies proof that he/she has at least 10% disability~~  
18                   due to service-related injury.”

19                   **Section 3. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application of  
20 any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court  
21 of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its

1 provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid  
2 shall not be affected thereby.

3           **Section 4. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein  
4 shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or  
5 acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted  
6 under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding  
7 instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have  
8 the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal,  
9 which shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.


10           **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by  
11 the Governor, or it becoming law without such approval.

Prefiled: 4/16/2025

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Introduced by:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Rep. Julie M. A. Ogo

Reviewed for legal sufficiency by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
House Legal Counsel

Date: 4/15/25