



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Eloy S. Inos
Governor

Jude U. Hofschneider
Lieutenant Governor

MAY 31 2013

Honorable Ralph DLG. Torres
Senate President, The Senate
Eighteenth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Honorable Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero
Speaker, House of Representatives
Eighteenth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law Senate Bill No. 18-02, entitled, "To amend the Commonwealth Vehicle Code to authorize active duty U.S. military personnel stationed outside the CNMI in any state or territory to maintain or renew their vehicle registration in the CNMI, or register a new vehicle in the CNMI by complying with CNMI registration requirements or any comparable requirements in the state or territory where they are stationed; and for other purposes," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Eighteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 18-08**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,


JUDE U. HOFSCHEIDER
Acting Governor

cc: Governor; Attorney General's Office; Department of Public Safety; Press Secretary;
Special Assistant for Administration; Special Assistant for Programs and Legislative
Review



THE SENATE
EIGHTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

SENATE BILL NO. 18-02

AN ACT

To amend the Commonwealth Vehicle Code to authorize active duty U.S. military personnel stationed outside the CNMI in any state or territory to maintain or renew their vehicle registration in the CNMI, or register a new vehicle in the CNMI by complying with CNMI registration requirements or any comparable requirements in the state or territory where they are stationed; and for other purposes.

SENATE ACTION

Offered by Senator(s): Francisco Q. Cruz/Francisco M. Borja/Jude U. Hofschneider

Date: January 24, 2013

Referred to: Committee on Judiciary, Government and Law

Standing Committee Report No.: None


Final Reading: January 31, 2013

HOUSE ACTION

Referred to: Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations

Standing Committee Report No.: None

First and Final Reading: May 09, 2013


Dolores S. Bermudes
Senate Clerk

EIGHTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE**2ND DAY, FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2013****S. B. NO. 18-02****AN ACT**

To amend the Commonwealth Vehicle Code to authorize active duty U.S. military personnel stationed outside the CNMI in any state or territory to maintain or renew their vehicle registration in the CNMI, or register a new vehicle in the CNMI by complying with CNMI registration requirements or any comparable requirements in the state or territory where they are stationed; and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE EIGHTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that active duty service in
2 the United States military is an admirable undertaking and we, the people of the
3 Commonwealth, are grateful to all citizens who undertake such service. Similarly, the
4 active duty military personnel of the CNMI who are stationed outside the islands in other
5 states or territories are proud representatives of the CNMI, and a reminder to the citizens in
6 the mainland of the contributions of CNMI to homeland security. While away from home
7 on active duty service, however, CNMI military personnel may be homesick and need ties to
8 keep them in touch with home.

9 The Legislature further finds that in order to provide a sense of nostalgic connection
10 to home and to identify with their island heritage, active duty military personnel serving
11 abroad should be permitted to maintain or renew their vehicle registration, or register their
12 new vehicle(s) at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles upon submission of an application and other
13 required documents. Qualified military personnel are also required to comply with any
14 additional vehicle registration requirement of the state or territory in which they are
15 stationed. This will help make active duty personnel “feel at home while away from home”
16 and help preserve and carry on our cultural heritage. Additionally, the registration of such

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1 vehicles fees will be a source of new revenue for the CNMI.

2 The Legislature finds that many other states permit out-of-state active duty military
3 personnel to operate a vehicle in their state with valid license plates from the individual's
4 home state or territory, as long as the out-of-state vehicle registration requirements are
5 comparable to the vehicle registration requirements of their state. The Commonwealth
6 Vehicle Code, however, does not present clear direction pertaining to the vehicle registration
7 of active duty military personnel from the CNMI stationed outside the CNMI in other states
8 or territories.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to amend the Commonwealth Vehicle Code
10 to authorize active duty U.S. military personnel to maintain or renew their vehicle
11 registration in the CNMI, or register new vehicles while stationed in any of the states or
12 territories of the United States. Moreover, this Act extends government immunity to injuries
13 caused by inspections or lack thereof from vehicles owned by active duty U.S. military
14 personnel that register their vehicles in the CNMI.

15 **Section 2. Amendment.** Title 9, Division 2, Chapter 1 of the Commonwealth Code
16 is amended by adding a new section 2117 to read as follows:

17 **“§ 2117. Registration: CNMI Active Duty Military Personnel.**

18 (a) *Definition.* For purposes of this section, the term “active duty military personnel”
19 means a person who is on full time duty in active military service in the United States
20 military including the Army, Navy, Marine Corp, Coast Guard, Army, Air National Guard
21 or active reserve component of the Army, Air Force or Navy.

22 (b) *Application.* CNMI residents who are active military duty personnel stationed
23 outside of the CNMI in any state or territory of the United States may maintain or renew
24 their vehicle registration in the CNMI, or register new vehicles in the CNMI at the Bureau of
25 Motor Vehicles.

26 (c) The active duty military personnel must submit to the Bureau of Motor Vehicle
27 the following requirements along with an application for vehicle registration:

- 28 (1) Proof of active duty status;
29 (2) Ownership or title of vehicle;

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- 1 (3) Passed inspection of vehicle;
2 (4) Current vehicle insurance; and
3 (5) Any other vehicle registration requirement of the state or territory in
4 which the active duty military personnel is stationed.

5 The inspection or vehicle insurance may be obtained from the CNMI or the
6 state or territory where the vehicle is located.

7 (d) A spouse or legally designated representative on behalf of a qualifying owner
8 who is serving on active duty may register or renew a vehicle under this section.

9 (e) *Fee.* The fee for the registration or issuance of a vehicle license plate under this
10 section shall not exceed the fee charged for a similar license plate for the same class of
11 vehicle.

12 (f) *Issuance.* A vehicle license plate shall be issued only to the active duty registered
13 owner of the vehicle, his or her spouse, or legally designated representative.

14 (1) Registration for a vehicle license plate shall not be limited to one vehicle
15 per active duty military personnel.

16 (2) Vehicle license plates issued under this section shall not be transferable to
17 any other person.

18 (3) Vehicle license plates shall be assigned to noncommercial passenger
19 motor vehicles and noncommercial motorcycles.

20 (g) If the state or territory of residence does not require the basic vehicle registration
21 requirements mentioned listed in subsection (c), the active duty military personnel shall
22 provide the CNMI Bureau of Motor Vehicles with the above-listed vehicle registration
23 requirements as mandated by this Title.

24 (h) Upon return to the CNMI from active duty, the active duty military personnel
25 shall ensure that his or her vehicle registration is active and valid pursuant to the
26 Commonwealth Vehicle Code.”

27 **Section 3. Amendment.** 9 CMC §3109 is hereby amended to read as follows:

28 **“§3109. Government Immunities.**

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1 The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, its officers,
2 employee's or agents shall not be liable for any injury caused in whole or in part by the
3 issuance, denial suspension or revocation of any safety inspection certificate or sticker by
4 any licensed safety inspection station or the failure of any public employee to make an
5 inspection, or inspection which is done inadequately or negligently, for any government
6 vehicle or vehicle owned by an active duty military personnel stationed outside of the CNMI
7 in a state or territory of the United States."

8 **Section 4. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any such
9 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent
10 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or
11 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

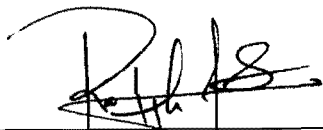
12 **Section 5. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be
13 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes
14 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers
15 contained in this Act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

19 **Section 6. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
20 Governor or becoming law without such approval.

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CERTIFIED BY:

ATTESTED BY:




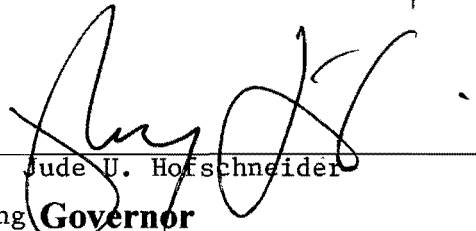
RALPH DLG. TORRES
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE



JOVITA M. TAIMANAO
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

APPROVED

 this 31st day of July, 2013



Jude U. Hofschneider
Acting **Governor**
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands