

# Senate Transportation Committee

*Vivian Hall 271-3091*

**HB 1078-FN**, creating a gold star family and gold star father license plate.

**Hearing Date:** April 21, 2026

**Time Opened:** 1:42 p.m.

**Time Closed:** 1:57 p.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Fenton, Ricciardi, McConkey and Ward

**Members of the Committee Absent :** Senator Prentiss

**Bill Analysis:** This bill creates a gold star family and gold star father license plate.

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**Sponsors:**

Rep. Michael Murphy

Rep. A. Davis

Rep. Korzen

Rep. Moffett

Rep. Ouellet

Sen. Rochefort

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**Who supports the bill:** Mike Oullet, Coos District 3, Mike Murphy, Coos District 6, and Arnold Davis, Coos, District 2; Stephanie Ouellette, Survivor Outreach Services; Lori Korzen; Erica Grone; and Steve Grone.

**Who opposes the bill:** None.

**Who is neutral on the bill:** John Marasco and Jennifer O’Leary, Division of Motor Vehicles; and Kevin Grady, State Veterans Advisory Committee.

**Summary of testimony presented in support:**

**Representative Arnold Davis, Coos, District 2**

- Rep. Davis stated that this legislation is intended to allow fathers and families to honor the sacrifice of their family members by creating a gold star father and family license plate.
- He stated that in previous sessions a similar bill was put on hold due to the fiscal note exceeding \$200,000.
- He stated that because of the Department of Safety’s updated plate manufacturing process, the cost has been significantly reduced to approximately \$20,000.

- He stated that he submitted an amendment that clarifies the recognition of family members.
- Families would be able to use birth certificates or marriage certificates to prove they were related to the deceased.

**Senator McConkey** asked about the methods of verifying a relation to a deceased family member. He read that an individual could use a birth certificate, marriage certificate, or a United States Department of Veterans Affairs benefit letter. He asked if that was the total language he thought the amendment should contain.

**Rep. Davis** responded yes, that was the language that was recommended by the Deputy Adjutant General.

### **Erica and Steve Grone**

- Mr. and Ms. Grone said that this bill would help them to honor and remember their son, Tanner, who was lost in a helicopter crash in Cyprus.
- She asked the committee to allow fathers and families to have a gold star license plate.
- Ms. Grone said that in New Hampshire, only mothers are currently eligible to receive a gold star plate.
- She strongly disagreed that she should be the only one in the family to obtain the gold star plate; other states have plates for fathers and families.

### **Stephanie Ouellette, Survivor Outreach Services**

- Ms. Ouellette stated that her brother was killed in Afghanistan and she is a gold star sister.
- She said that currently there is a decal plate for gold star families, but this was meant to be a bridge from having nothing to having something.
- She argued that gold star families deserve a better solution.
- She read statements from two people who had lost their family members in war and were in support of the legislation.

**Senator Ward** how many people would be eligible for the gold star family or father plates.

**Stephanie Ouellette** stated that the number would be around 750-800 people. This would be the high end.

**Senator Ward** asked what the cost would be.

**Stephanie Ouellette** said that they did not know but they heard the representative say \$20,000.

**John Marasco and Jennifer O’Leary, Division of Motor Vehicles**

- Director Marasco explained that there are currently 35 gold star mother plates active in New Hampshire. He stated that the gold star family and father plates would be more professional and fitting to honor our heroes. He stated that the Division of Motor Vehicles would be honored to have the opportunity to make the plates.
- Ms. O’Leary explained that the cost of production for both the gold star family and gold star father plate would be between \$28,000 and \$55,000 depending on how many they need to produce. She stated that there is a charge associated with the registration fee that covers the cost of plate production.

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Date Hearing Report completed: April 23, 2026