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Description of document: The state of Washington list of prohibited or banned personalized license plates, procedures for screening personalized license plate applications, and where available, administrative appeals of withdrawn personalized plates, 2012 Requested date: 27-October-2012 Released date: 05-November-2012 Posted date: 28-January-2013 Source of document: State of Washington Department of Licensing Finance and Administration Division Vehicle and Vessel Public Disclosure PO Box 2957 Olympia WA 98507-2957 Note: Not all requested items were available from all respondents This material from state Motor Vehicle Departments contains references to language and material that some people may find offensive and may not be suitable for all ages.

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STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING Finance and Administration Division - Vehicle and Vessel Public Disclosure

PO Box 2957 • Olympia WA 98507-2957

November 5, 2012

PUBLIC RECORD REQUEST – PERSONALIZED LICENSE PLATES

Thank you for your request for information dated October 27, 2012 which was received by the Department of Licensing on September 30, 2011. A copy of your request and a blank personalized license plate application are enclosed for reference.

You requested a copy of the list of prohibited personalized license plates, i.e. the listing that is used as a guideline to the DMV employee who screens personalized license plate applications for offensive or objectionable words or phrases or messages. The Department has no records responsive to this request.

You requested a copy of the internal instructions to DMV employees on procedures for screening personalized license plate applications for offensive or objectionable words or phrases or messages. The Department has no records responsive to this request.

You requested a copy of each administrative appeal letter from A) applicants whose personalized license plate was rejected, and/or from B) motorists whose personalized license plated were reclaimed by the DMV following a complaint from a member of the public. You may restrict the search for this portion of the request to the time period January 1, 2010 to the present. Records responsive to this request are enclosed.

With this report your request is complete and is closed.

Sincerely,

Jim Loosen Public Disclosure Office (360) 359-4002

TD-420-955 (R/10/09) Fax (360) 570-7088

Skip a trip – go online <u>www.dol.wa.gov</u>

The Department of Licensing has a policy of providing equal access to its services. If you need special accommodation, please call (360) 359-4002 or TTY (360) 664-8885.



Personalized License Plate Application

Use this form to apply for a personalized license plate. For fee information, contact a vehicle licensing office or visit us at **www.dol.wa.gov**. Fees cannot be refunded once an application has been processed. Applications can be processed at the King County Licensing Division or mailed with a copy of your current registration and a check or money order to:

Department of Licensing PO Box 9909 Olympia WA 98507-8500

Information and restrictions

- · Allow at least eight weeks to receive your plates.
- · Plates can only be ordered by a registered owner.
- · Personalized plates are flat and do not have raised characters.
- · Large plates for automobiles or trailers are issued with one to seven characters.
- · Small plates for motorcycles or small trailers are issued with one to six characters.
- · Personalized plates receiving complaints are subject to cancellation.
- Because of similarity, the letters and numbers "I," "1," "O," and "0" (zero) are considered the same.
- We cannot issue a plate with a single letter or number of "I," "1," "O," or "0" (zero).
- · Hyphens and spaces are considered characters and the only punctuation marks accepted.
- To personalize a special license plate, complete page 2 of this form.
- Unacceptable plates include those which may be: sexual or vulgar in nature; blasphemous; misleading; related to
 illegal substances; implying ethnic, lifestyle, or gender slurs; or are contrary to our mission to promote highway safety.

Making your plate choice

- · List plate choice in order of preference.
- Clearly indicate if you're requesting the letter or number characters "I," "1," "O," or "0" (zero).
- · Indicate spaces or dashes between letters or numbers.
- The plate will be made exactly as indicated on the application.
- List meaning of plate. Your application will be returned if the meaning is not included.
- Check the box for the vehicle plate type.

Name of registered owner					Email		
Mailing address					(Area code) Daytime telephone number		
City					State	ZIP code	
Current WA plate number	Tab expiration (month/year)	Make	Year	Vehicle Identificat	antification Number		
Plate choices							
EVERGREEN STATE		EVERGREEN STATE			EVERGREEN STATE		
Vehicle plate type							
		Position (if signing for	r a company)				
Signature of registered owner					Date		

Personalized special plates

- 1. Complete the vehicle and plate information on page 1.
- 2. Check the box next to the **Background design** you want to order below. Designs with * are not available as trailer plates.
- 3. Sign and date the application on page 1.
- 4. Submit the completed application as indicated on page 1.

Background design

Standard

Standard Mountain Background

Collegiate

□ CŴU (Wildcat)* □ ESC (Tree)* □ EWU (Eagle)* □ GU (Bulldog) □ UW (Block "W")* □ WSU (Cougar)* □ WWU (Viking Ship)*

Organizations

- Helping Kids Speak (Mason)
- Keep Kids Safe (Hand prints)
- Law Enforcement Memorial
- □ Washington's Lighthouses
- We Love Our Pets

Personalized military license plate

If you already have a military license plate and want to personalize it, you only need to follow steps 1 and 2 below.

Professional Fire Fighters

Applicants must include a letter of

authorization from the Washington

State Council of Fire Fighters. Any

change to the record, including

personalizing the plate, requires

a letter of authorization from the

Washington State Council of Fire

Applicants must include a letter of

authorization from the fire district(s)

and Paramedics

Fighters.

□ Volunteer Fire Fighters

where they serve(d).

- 1. Complete the vehicle and plate information on page 1.
- 2. Fill in the personalized plate information and sign the personalized plate application on page 1.
- 3. Check the box for the: military plate you want to have personalized.
 - decal (available only for an Armed Forces Collection Plate)
 - eligibility you are declaring (required only for an Armed Forces Collection Plate)
- 4. Sign and date the military plate section of this application below only if ordering an Armed Forces Collection Plate.

Purple Heart

Purple Heart* (Supporting documentation required)

Armed Forces Collection

- Plates:
- 🗆 Army
- Air Force
- Marines
- Coast Guard
- □ Navy
- National Guard

Decals:

- Veteran
- Disabled Veteran
- Retired
- Army Guard
- Air Retired
- □ Active Duty
- Air Guard
- Fallen Hero
- Reserves
- Gold Star
- □ Family

TD-420-077 (R/12/11)WA Page 2 of 2

I declare that I am eligible to purchase an Armed Forces Collection license plate because I am:

- A veteran, as defined in RCW 41.04.005 or RCW 41.04.007
- Active duty military
- A reservist
- A member of the National Guard
- A spouse of a deceased veteran
- A family member of a qualified veteran or military member as described above

X

Signature of registered owner for this type of plate

Date

We are committed to providing equal access to our services. If you need accommodation, please call (360) 902-3600 or TTY (360) 664-0116.

- Service Organizations & Associations Parks and Environment
 - Endangered Wildlife (Orca)
 - Washington's National Park Fund (Mountains)
 - Washington State Parks (Waterfall)
 - □ Washington's Wildlife Collection (Bear) □ Washington's Wildlife Collection (Deer)
 - □ Washington's Wildlife Collection (Deer)
 - Wild on Washington (Bald Eagle)

Interests and Hobbies

- Music Matters
- Share the Road
- Ski and Ride Washington
- □ Square Dancer*
- Stadium*

plate to remain valid. This personalized license plate has been canceled, per Washington Administrative Code 308-96A-065(3). If you wish to keep the plates (not on the vehicle), feel free to do so.

You are required by state law to remove the plates "UBUNTU" from your vehicle and attached the new license plates mailed to you on February 26, 2010.

I'm sorry my response cannot be more positive for you. If you have further questions, please let me know.

Thank you.

Toni Smith Vehicle Licensing (360) 902-3812 <u>tsmith@dol.wa.gov</u>

From: CASEY THOMAS [mailto:casetermon@msn.com] Sent: Saturday, February 27, 2010 11:57 PM To: Smith, Toni (DOL) Subject: Humanity Towards Others

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am receipt of your letter dated February 26, 2010 regarding my personalized license plate "Ubuntu". The Department of Licensing had plenty of time to review this request and in fact approved and issued these plates to me in March 2008. These plates were issued to me based on the information I provided at the time i completed the application and I will restate now.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu defines this word as, "A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed."

On June 18, 2009, in her swearing-in remarks as <u>U.S. Department of State</u> Special Representative for Global Partnerships, <u>Elizabeth Bagley</u> discussed ubuntu in the context of American <u>foreign policy</u>, stating that "In understanding the responsibilities that come with our interconnectedness, we realize that we must rely on each other to lift our world from where it is now to where we want it to be in our lifetime, while casting aside our worn out preconceptions, and our outdated modes of statecraft."

I have attached a clip of former president of South Africa and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Nelson Mandela, explaining the true meaning of "Ubuntu". <u>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu</u> (philosophy).

I find it somewhat cynical that the Personalized License Plate Review Committee would find some sort of negative connotation to the word "Ubuntu", in light of the overwhelming, worldwide positive feeling that the word evokes. "Humanity Towards Others" and "I am because we are" are philosophies and ideas that uplift the human spirit and yet this committee seems to wish to eliminate its inspiration. After an extensive web search of this word "Ubuntu", I cannot find a single sexual reference of any stature. As far as your statement in the first paragraph of your letter that this plate can be sexually suggestive in nature, please provide me with the basis for this conclusion.

At this time, I respectfully decline to return my personalized plates. Please feel free to contact me at (425) 985-1497.

Sincerely, Gordon Thomas



P.O. Box 98784, Des Moines WA 98198-0784 www.BusinessOfPolicing.com 206-878-2800

September 28, 2010

WA Department of Licensing P.O. Box 9909 Olympia, WA 98507-8500

ATTENTION: Billie, Supervisor, Personalized Plate Section

This letter is to request reconsideration of our application for a personalized plate stamped: "THE BOP." My wife and I were greatly surprised to learn today in a conversation with Dale that the Department considered THE BOP offensive. It is the acronymn of our police consulting business, and is used commonly in our business meetings and marketing. No one, young or old, has ever indicated it has an offensive meaning.

After the discussion with Dale, we went on-line to *wikipedia.org*, and entered "BOP." It was only then that we learned of the 35 entries for the term, there is **one** slang entry meaning "whore." Considering wikipedia can be edited by virtually *anyone*, we question the reliability of the use and the extent of common knowledge of BOP meaning "whore." We also noted it is the name of an American magazine for teens - which certainly means it has Federal Government approval as it is distributed openly in the mail.

We certainly appreciate your responsibility to avoid issuing license plates which would offend the decency of the common public. We ask for reconsideration on the basis that THE BOP would not be considered offensive by the common public. Those who would give THE BOP an "offensive meaning" are few, and they have contorted the three letters into a meaning within their criminal society which would not be known to the common public. The practice of taking innocent words and creating a "double meaning" known only to other criminals is common as a shield to prevent detection. My wife and I are members of the "senior community" and the plates, THE BOP, on our Ford Explorer should certainly allay **any question** of sinister meaning to anyone.

Sincerely,

OGER BAKER

4 J ...

SHIRLEY BAKER

RECEIVED

OCT 0 4 2010

TITLE & HEG. CONTROL VEHICLE SERVICES

Strategic Leadership and Planning for the 21st Century

ROGER A. BAKER, Principal Consultant · <u>RogerBaker@BusinessOfPolicing.com</u> · 206-878-2800 SHIRLEY BAKER, Administrative Officer · <u>ShirleyBaker@BusinessOfPolicing.com</u> · 206-660-4333

Holland, Dawn (DOL)

From: Sent: To: Cc: Subject: Becker, Julie [jbecker@ccmclending.com] Wednesday, August 10, 2011 1:27 PM Holland, Dawn (DOL) David Becker; guzags@comcast.net Personalized Plate Rejection Appeal

Hi Dawn,

First off thank you for giving me the opportunity to appeal WADOL's rejection of our personalized plate.

I am appealing to your committee for the rejection of the plate we ordered "FMLYJLZ". I would like to describe the meaning of this plate and hopefully it will be more clear that our intent is not to be offensive. My Fiance just purchased this car in honor of our upcoming marriage and blending families. It is something we hope will be a great project for our family. My name is Julie. Since I was a young child I have been called Jules by most of my friends and family. Dave (my fiancée's) friends and family have elected to call me Family Jules. We thought it would be a fun name for the car. This is a very old car, a 1936 ford coupe, not a fancy muscle car being driven around with thumping music by a 20 yr old kid. There is lots of work for us to do as a FAMILY to fix it up. Someday it will belong to our kids making the plate even more meaningful. I would like to say that I have talked to many dol employees and also other people, professional and not and everybody thinks that is a great name for our car. Not one person has hesitated or taken offense. This is also the name of a TV show on a network anyone can watch. I think not approving this plate is taking censorship too far. There is a neighbor with a plate that reads FNBEAST. Are you to tell me that is not offensive and FMLYJLZ is? I do not understand the reasoning behind that at all.

Please reconsider our request, we appreciate your time and welcome your phone call should you want to speak with us further. Thank you for your reconsideration, and thank you Dawn for presenting this. If I could email doughnuts to your meeting I would :)

With sincere appreciation,

David and Julie Becker (yes, same last name not married yet) :)

509.209.7255 Dave 509.218.0919 Julie



Julie Becker

Mortgage Loan Specialist MLO#235848 Cherry Creek Mortgage Company 16201 E. Indiana Ave., Suite 1250 Spokane, WA 99216 509.218.0919 cell 509.241.1491 efax To: Dept of Licensing Attn: Toni Smith P.O. Box 9909 Olympia, WA 98507-8500

RE: Letter dated 01/28/2011 Re: Complaint regarding my WA State issued personalized Plate – FUBAR

In 1975 Personalized Plates, or Vanity Plates were authorized by the legislature and were made available to the public. These plates could contain between 2 to 7 numbers or letters in any combination that did not conflict with existing plates.

I applied for and received my personalized plate in 1976 and have had it for <u>36 years</u>. I believe in 1981-1982 I applied for and got the personalized Plate FUBAR TOO for my wife's Fiero Pontiac and the state issued that plate.

To my knowledge there has never been a prior complaint and for someone now to take offense seems a little odd.

As with any acronym it can have multiple meanings and taken different ways by different people. When I first ordered this plate it had the meaning of Fun, Unique, Beautiful And Rare That was my personality at the time.

I've had this plate on many different 4X4 trucks and it meant Found Under Bushes And Rocks.

I also understand that it could mean Fouled Up Beyond Repair, or Fouled Up Beyond All Recognition or Fouled Up Beyond All Reality.

Stanley Tools uses that term to mean "Functional Utility Bar" the DEC Computer company uses the term to mean "Failed UniBus Address Register" I've seen taverns with this name, as well as different businesses.

When I originally applied back in 1976 there was never any thought about vulgarity, being obscene or any malice or intent.

Etymology and History:

FUBAR is slang (mangled German) for the word "Furchtbar," which means terrible or horrible -- the opposite of "Wunderbar." Furcht means fear, literally translated, and the "bar" is added to make it an adverb or noun, as the case may be. "Wunderbar" translates literally into wonderful. Furchtbar is an idiom and translates to mean, terrible, or horrible

I would hope that you would reconsider the revocation of my personalized plate based on one persons opinion and or interpretation of it's meaning.

Thanks,

man 2-3-2011

Randall L Larson 10508 95th St NE Lake Stevens, WA 98258

RECEIVED

FEB 08 2011 HTLE & REG. WINIHO VEHICLE SERVICES

Hello there, I am writing to try and reverse a disputed personalized license plate. The plate in question is PHO CAT. The reasoning behind this is I own, and have for the last 17 years a large gaming company in this state called Cat Daddy Games. I am also partnered with a corporation that owns several Pho Noodle soup restaurants in Indiana. Because of the games company name, our employees often refer to themselves Cat's so, you might have a Game Cat, or a workout Cat etc... This being the case for me it made the most sense to have a plate called PHO CAT. It is my understanding that this has been denied due to the fact that the word CAT translates into something pornographic or sexual in the Vietnamese language. I have a problem with this on several different fronts. First, I can find no such reference to a translation in any Vietnamese dictionary. I have spoke to the owners of the PHO restaurants about what sort of negative impact putting the word CAT after PHO would entail and they are all in agreement that it would be a far stretch to make it be used in some sort of vulgar meaning. Second, this is not a direct translation. I would understand if I had a specific word that translate directly like a curse word or something employing a negative slur but that is simply not the case here. In fact, I believe putting my last name HOWE on the plate would be far more offensive to a larger magnitude of people than this would ever be. Please take a second to review this with your panel and reconsider allowing me to have this plate.

Thank you for your time,

-Harley Howe (Current Plate 123 VZR for a Dodge Viper) Cat Daddy Games 425-746-1165

Holland, Dawn (DOL)

From: Sent: To: Subject: Russell STURM [resturm@msn.com] Thursday, March 10, 2011 4:50 PM Holland, Dawn (DOL) plate

Hello my name is Russell E Sturm I have submitted to get a personal license plate with the name <u>PORK</u> I have had that plate before in the late 70's when first got my drivers license now that I'm 52 years old I would like to get it back if possible. I have had that nickname over forty years and to this day I still have friends call me by PORK.

The reason I have applied is he hasn't renewed it and its 60 days over so its open game. The reason they gave me is its not nice word, so why do you have on any motorcycle. I would hope you would reconsider and let me have it please.

Russ Sturm

if not please refund my money and make sure you don't give it the motorcycle either and all the rest that have it too.

Dear Sirs,

some college friends and i have began a chevrolet nova club called nova university, simply college buddies that are restoring some old nova's. we thought it would be fun to use our initials and then nova u to personalize each of our cars. my plate # would be runovau, frank underwood's would be funovau and so on, your dept. decided that my plate is misleading or offensive. please reconsider for this club is just starting to grow and we are all excited to get it going. i assure you that any of the plates that we apply for are not intended to be

1

misleading or offensive in any way. we are just some old college buddies out for a little fun with our cars while making each car personalized to it's owner.

Thank-You, Roger Ulm

My Current LICENCE PLATE # 15 AEC 3429

RECEIVED

SEP 152011

TITLE & REG. CONTROL VEHICLE SERVICES

RECEIVED

FEB 1 6 2010

2-9-10

LICEnsing,

TITLE & REG. CONTROL VEHICLE SERVICES

1 just received this notice (enclosed) Advising me About the license number DBACHRE. The DBACHRE (debruchery) was rejected by your licensing department as a mable or Admissrible plate message. money WAS Point Sor 6 months ago I believe. I was then given a new retuined license instead of DBACHRE because of some mixing by Approx. \$50-tor your agency. My license request must have been initially the. accepted and then someone in higher authority (not god) Thust SPRIAT have then looped at it again and said no to my absolutely pinte. genius imagination . Was it denied so that it could be used \sim by someone with connections ? That's what I thought of first, that was my unital reaction. I don't trust the State stall. De bruchery has been somehow connected with unseemly Sexual activity. I have never thought of it that way. Debauchery I alunipment to me, linding one Astray, or going out and used drinking or chrousing (sic2), but without the end result or do that intention to prive Sexual liaison. And come to tindout, it 2 also means to take the bark off of a tumber or log. Being An ex-logger and sawmill worker, for my DAJ, years ago, 1 thought the menning of debauchery was near perfect for a license plate for me. Your agency in Freend rejected it without explanation and without the Ability to Appeal your deusion, which is wrong. If DBACHRE is AVAILABLE NOW I believe I should have 1st dibs on it as I was, I'm sure, the originator of it. Let me know, as I believe that the plates were even made and just not sent because of some puritanical objections. Homazing .!. RKB

Department of Licensing Olympia WA.

Dear Ms Smith & Committee

On February 24th 2010 I submitted a request for a special license plate from the Department of Wildlife (the one with the Bull Elk on it). I also requested it to be personalized. My original request was to have "FULUBUL" put on the plate. I am an avid outdoorsman and love to archery hunt for Bull elk every year. I also belong to multiple internet forums where others like myself can discuss everything from elk hunting, conservation and everything outdoors. Everyone on these forums has a name they go by and most have something to do with elk. My name on these forums is FullaBull which is just a whimsical play on words to say I love hunting for bull elk. This request was denied because I was told that it could be taken the wrong way. I asked about the person who has a personalized plate with "FULABUL" on it and was told that Bul was the person's last name which made that ok...?

So, I decided I would change my request and asked if I could have "ELKNUT" instead. This is a very well known name in elk hunting circles as it is the name of an internet company called Elknut Productions which sells products to help elk hunters. The person who owns the company lives in Idaho and has "ELKNUT" as his personalized plate. I contacted Paul (the owner) and asked if he would mind someone is Washington having ELKNUT on their plate as well and he said he would love to see that. So I made that my request.

I then received a call saying that "ELKNUT" might also be taken the wrong way. I asked how and I was told this might look like I was speaking about elk's testicals...??

A license plate with a Bull Elk picture on it and the letters "ELKNUT" says exactly what it means, someone who is nutty (synonyms- batty, silly, mad, wacky, foolish) when it comes to elk. I did not ask for "ELKNUTS" or "ELKSNUT", yes, even I would agree that might be taken the wrong way.

I am writing to ask that you please reconsider my personalized plate request for "ELKNUT" to be put on the special "Bull ELK" WA. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife plate.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Fred Talbot

RECEIVED

MAR 0 4 2010

TITLE & HEG. CONTROL VEHICLE SERVICES March 7, 2010

Department of Licensing PO Box 9020 Olympia WA 98507-9020

Dear Mr. Toni Smith:

This is my response to the notification regarding a complaint made about my personalized license plate, "JUGALET.'

The allegation is that my plate is in some way associated with or related to illegal activities.

I want to start out by introducing myself to you and the Department. I am a mental health advocate with a degree in Law and Justice. I work all over Pierce County, driving my car to crisis outreaches 40+ hours per week. I am a law abiding citizen and I have devoted the last 15 years of my life to helping others.

I was shocked and offended that someone would make a complaint about my plate. I have had the plates for a few years now and I have never had a problem with them or with others regarding them. They are symbolic only to a select pool of music lovers.

JUGALET is simply the name given to fans of an underground Christian record label (Psychopathic Records). The term JUGALET is in no way associated with illegal activity.

Please let me know if you need further information regarding my plates.

Sincerely, Lisa Kleiner Lisa Kleiner

RECEIVED

MAR 102010

TITLE & HEG. CONTROL VEHICLE SERVICES

May 17, 2010

Dear Ms. Toni Smith:

I apologize for not being able to respond sooner for the recent notice that I had received regarding the personalized plate, "PUINSAI", on my vehicle. After reading about the complaint, I would like to say Thank You for giving me the opportunity to provide an explanation as to why I had chose this phrase. I am originally a resident from the State of Hawaii and had given the vehicle to my eldest sibling to utilize as a primary vehicle. Growing up, throughout our teenage years, my brother constantly wore this brand name of clothing and always used this word whenever he made fun of me. It was his unique way of saying, "whatever," and to me, it was sort of his nickname. So, upon giving my brother this vehicle, I thought that it would be a nice gift and gesture to have his plate personalized with his most frequently used word and nickname. I'm sorry to hear that it had given someone the wrong impression; however, it was not the intention as to why it was chosen. Please feel free to contact me at (253)970-9994 or email Semana2266@hotmail.com if you have any further questions regarding this issue. If it is at all possible, I would appreciate it if you could update me on the outcome of this review. Again, thank you for this opportunity, your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

DOAMADA

Maggie Semana`

RECEIVED MAY 2 0 2010 NTLE & NEG. CONTROL VEHICLE SERVICES

Smith, Toni (DOL)

From:	Stacey Vogrinec [staceyvogrinec@yahoo.com]
Sent:	Thursday, September 23, 2010 3:15 PM
То:	Smith, Toni (DOL)
Subject:	RE: license plate "SHGNWGN"

I am writing in response to a letter was sent to me by the review committee. The letter requests that I provide a further explanation as to why I chose this personalized license plate "SHGNWGN."

As a child this is what I use to call the Mystery Machine. The van belonged Shaggy and for some strange reason this is what I started calling it when I was about 5. I have called it the Shaggin' Wagon ever since then and my kids do to and they are 6, 8 and 10 years old. It's just what we call it and we don't consider it to be anything offense and we didn't think it would cause a problem, especially after we found out that it was already previously issued in the state once before. Please feel free to call me with any other questions (480) 516-3525.

Thank you! Stacey Vogrinec

Sent from my iPhone