Dear Sir/Ma'am

My name is Dana Condray and my husband is a retired Chief Equipment Operator serving over 20 years in the United States Marines and United States Navy with most of his time with the United States Navy Seabees Construction Battalion. He served three tours during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.
As with many other Seabee wives I am extremely proud of my husband and every other "bee" who proudly wore the uniform.
For over 81 years the Seabee's have developed leaders, fighters, builder's and more whom have helped make this country what it is today. John Wayne liked them so much he made a movie about them - The Fighting Seabee's in 1942!
Many of the Seabees who fought in WWII have passed on leaving behind a history that will continue on for generations to come.

I kindly ask that the Senate Financial Committee and State of Colorado pass the bill to add the United States Seabee license plate to the list allowing us the opportunity to honor those who served before us and to help pave the way for the future generations of men and women by proudly displaying on our vehicles the true meaning of the bee's -"We Build, We Fight - CAN DO!"

Kindly,
Dana Condray

Good morning, my name is James Garinger, and I am here to petition you for a military license plate for the U.S. Naval Construction Battalions, better known as the Seabees. Their nickname "Seabees" is derived from C.B. or construction battalion. Their simple motto tells the story: "We build, we fight". Their mascot a "Bumblebee" holding a hammer, a wrench, and a machine gun was chosen because it depicts the Seabees ability to build and fight, sometimes both at the same time. One example of this action was at Henderson field on Guadalcanal, when the 6th Seabees joined the 1st Marine Division. The Seabees were building and repairing Henderson field, and at the same time battling the Japanese.

Prior to WW II civilian contractors numbered roughly 70,000 men working U.S.N. contracts overseas. International law made it illegal for civilian workers to resist an attack. Doing so would classify them as guerrillas and could lead to summary execution. This is what happened on Wake Island at the out brake of WW II.

December 28, 1941 Admiral Ben Moreell requested authority to commission three Naval Construction Battalions. His idea was to replace civilian workers with military personal in war zones. His request was approved January 5, 1942 by Admiral Nimitz. March 5, 1942 became the official birthday for the Seabees.

The earliest Seabees were recruited from the civilian construction trades, and were placed under the Navy's Civil Engineer Corps. Because of the emphasis placed on experience and skill rather than on physical standards, the average age of Seabees during the early days of the WW II was 37, many were in their 50's, and some were in their 60's. The average age for all other service branches was 27.

The first Naval Construction Detachment was sent to Bora Bora to build a complete refueling station, for ships and planes. The code name for Bora Bora was "Bobcat". In Seabee history the men building this base became known as "Bobcats". My uncle was a Bobcat.

They wear the Naval uniform but serve alongside the Marine Corps.

True, the Seabees wear the Naval uniform, but that is were the similarity ends. They are not "Boat Sailors". You could say the U.S. Coast Guard, because they have ships and boats, are closer to being part of the U.S. Navy than the Seabees.

They have been in all American wars since it's inception. From the island hopping of WW II, to the cold of Korea, the Jungles of Vietnam, the mountains of Bosnia, and the deserts of Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait. The Seabees have built entire bases, bulldozed and paved thousands of miles of roadways and airstrips, and accomplished a myriad of construction projects.

During WWII the Seabees had over 400 building projects. From the refueling depot at Bora Bora, to the famous North Field on Tinian.

In early May 1943, the Seabees became plank-holders for the U.S. Naval Combat Demolition Units and the Underwater Demolitions Teams. When the Seabees at Camp Peary Dynamiting and Demolition School graduated and were moved to Fort Pierce, FL., they formed the first Underwater Demolition Teams.

After Tarawa when the Navy misjudged the tides and the clearance needed for the landing craft. UDT Teams were sent in ahead of the amphibious troops to set explosives and clear the way for the landing craft.

There was a rivalry between the Marines and the Seabees as who landed on the beach first. One sign left on the beach by Underwater Demolition Team-4 read "Welcome U.S. Marines, by Seabee Demolition UDT's".

The Seabees often went ashore with the first wave of the amphibious assault troops, and started building and fighting under fire. Victory in the Pacific would have been extremely difficult without the bases, roads, airfields, and fuel storage installations constructed by the Seabees.

There was a sign at Bougainville, erected by the Third Marine Division, 2nd Raiders, that said, "So when we reach the 'Isle of Japan' with our caps at a jaunty tilt, we'll enter the city of Tokyo on the roads the Seabees built."

In the Atlantic, the Normandy invasion on D-Day June 4, 1944 saw the Seabees among the first to go ashore as members of the Naval Combat Demolition Units, working with the Army Engineers, hitting the beaches before dawn to set explosive charges to clear the concrete and steel hedge hogs, clearing a path for the landing craft to go ashore.

March, 1945 Construction Battalion Maintenance Units 627, 628, and 629 helped Gen. George Patton cross the Rhine.

General Douglas MacArthur once said "The only thing wrong with the Sea Bees, there is not enough of them".

In Korea the Seabees landed at Inchon with the assault troops. They fought enormous tides as well as enemy fire and provided pontoon causeways to help transport men and material from ship to shore.

Then the Seabees could be found throughout the war zone constructing, repairing and servicing air fields for various Marine Air Groups.

At the same time the Pentagon authorized the building of a Naval Air Station at Cubi Point, P.I., in support the war effort in Korea. Civilian contractors were offered the job, but all said it could not be done, because of the rugged area and harsh conditions. Seabee battalion MCB-3 was given the job. Construction was started in October, 1951. MCB-2 and MCB -5 soon joined MCB-3 to form a mega battalion. It was one of the largest earthmoving projects in the world, moving a mountain out into Subic Bay to create a 85,000 ft. long air strip, and a complete Naval Air Station Cubi Point, with an adjacent pier that was capable of docking the Navy's largest carriers.

In Vietnam the Seabees often fended off enemy forces alongside their Marine and Army counterparts, while building military bases for all branches of the service. Marvin G. Shields, CM3 received the Medal of Honor Posthumously for his actions while serving with the U.S. Army Special Forces.

Since March 5, 1942 the Seabees have received 1 Medal of Honor. 5 Navy Crosses, several Silver Stars and Bronze Stars, Hundreds of Purple Hearts, several Battle "E"s, and numerous other awards. Not a bad record for a construction group.

The Seabees have seen action in all four corners of the world, even Antarctica where they were assigned to operation Deep Freeze. Their task was the construction and maintenance of scientific bases for the National Science Foundation.

In their spare time they have contributed their talents to building schools, hospitals, orphanages, public utilities, and other needs for the local communities. The Seabees have become "The Navy's Goodwill Ambassadors". After Hurricane Katrina the Seabees from Gulfport, Mississippi helped clear roads and debris, delivering water, food, and fuel. One Waveland, Mississippi resident said "It won't be a Knight on a horse that will come to help you, it will be a Seabee in a green Navy truck".

In 1944 Construction Battalion Detachment 1058 was formed from screening Geologists, Petroleum Engineers, Oil Drillers, Tool Pushers, and Roughnecks, for Seabee North Slope Oil Exploration. The Seabees were drilling for oil on the North Slope, Alaska, back in 1944.

In 1945 Felix W. DeWeldon was commissioned to sculpt the Marine Corp Memorial, in Arlington, Virigina, better known as the Iwo Jima Memorial. It took him nine years to complete the memorial. It was dedicated on 11/10/54, the Marine Corp's birthday. Mr. DeWeldon served in WWII as a Seabee.

In Afghanistan NMCB 133 helped build Kandahar Airfield.

In Colorado there are several specialty license plates, with that there are several Military plates, two of which are the Fourth Infantry Division based at Fort Carson, and the Tenth Mountain Division based at Fort Drum, New York. Recently I saw a specialty license plate for "Porsche Cars", and another for the "Girl Scouts", and another for "Women in the Military"

Today, along with the Mobile Construction Battalions, there are

Amphibious Construction Battalions, and Under Water Construction Teams.

I feel the Seabees, by their past history, have earned consideration for a Specialized License Plate.

There are several retired, reservists, and ex-Seabee groups here in Colorado. I am confident that there is a strong interest in this project, and will have no trouble meeting the requirements set by the state.

I served with the Seabees from 1956 to 1960 on Guam, Saipan, Tinian, Okinawa, and many two by four islands. I was an E-5, Steelworker Second Class. I am very proud of my service.

Another one of our mottos is "The difficult we do immediately, the impossible takes a little longer".

Thank you for your time.