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PTSD diagnosis could appear on Georgia driver's licenses

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Current and former servicemembers living in Georgia could soon add a new piece of information to their driver's license: a PTSD diagnosis.

Under a law recently pushed through the state legislature, post-traumatic stress disorder would be noted on the license in the same way that a person's license might indicate corrective lenses are required for vision, according to a report in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Adding the information would be voluntary and require a sworn statement from a doctor. If signed by the governor, the bill would become law on July 1.

Sen. Ron Ramsey, the bill's sponsor, told the paper that the bill came at the suggestion of a former servicemember with post-traumatic stress disorder, who told him he feared a violent encounter with police officers.

"He said, 'God forbid anybody put handcuffs on me. I'd go berserk,'" the senator said.

Sen. John Douglas, an Army veteran who co-sponsored the bill, said the information on the license would let police know they might deal with a person differently.

"The police officer would know that a sudden move [by the motorist] wasn't necessarily an offensive move," Douglas told the Journal-Constitution.

But the bill's detractors question whether someone would put such personal information on their driver's license.

"Why would I want to put out there on my license – hey, I'm a nut job," said Marvin Myers, president of the Georgia Vietnam Veterans Alliance Inc.

And Lea R. Flowers, an assistant professor in Georgia State University's Department of Counseling & Psychological Services, wonders about the precedent it would set.

"But it could be a slippery slope," she said. "Will we offer that for bipolar? Schizophrenia?"

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"Don't ask, don't tell" repeal vote would not have survived House Armed Services Committee
Of the 26 Democrats who voted against the measure, eight sit on the House's military panel

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