

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2020 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4444

BY DELEGATES LINVILLE, ROHRBACH, LOVEJOY, MANDT,
WORRELL, MILLER, MAYNARD, LITTLE, SUMMERS AND
HANSHAW (MR. SPEAKER)

[Introduced January 21, 2020; Referred to the Committee
on Fire Departments and Emergency Medical Services
then Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,
2 designated §29-32-1; to amend said code by adding thereto a new article, designated
3 §29-33-1; and to amend said code by adding thereto a new article, designated §29-34-1,
4 all relating to establishing Medals of Valor and Medals for Bravery for emergency medical
5 services, firefighters, and law-enforcement officers; creating the Emergency Medical
6 Services Honor Board, the Firefighters Honor Board, and the Law-Enforcement Officers
7 Honor Board; establishing Medals of Honor for those EMS personnel, firefighters and law-
8 enforcement officers who go above and beyond “the call of duty”; and establishing
9 membership and duties of the boards.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 32. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES HONOR BOARD.

§29-32-1. Emergency Medical Services Honor Board.

1 (a) The Emergency Medical Services Honor Board is established as an advisory board to
2 the Legislature. The purpose of the board is to make recommendations for persons deemed
3 worthy to be awarded a “Medal of Valor” to recognize members of the Emergency Medical
4 Service in West Virginia who, in the performance of their duties, go above and beyond the
5 “call of duty” in rendering medical care to those they serve whether it be in the saving of life,
6 eliminating or reducing pain or prevention of further injury.

7 (b) Board membership. --

8 (1) The board shall consist of two members from each of the state’s senatorial districts;

9 (2) Each State Senator shall appoint one member representing his or her district;

10 (3) The board shall be comprised of emergency medical services personnel, medical
11 officials, doctors and other professionals who are qualified to evaluate and determine
12 whether the actions of emergency medical services first responders rise to the level of
13 being above and beyond the “call of duty”;

14 (4) Members shall serve a one-year term; and

15 (5) Members of the board serve without compensation.

16 (c) The board may consider candidates for the Medal of Valor who are identified by
17 members of the board or by other citizens, and may design a system for the receipt of those
18 recommendations.

19 (d) The board shall review identified individuals to determine if those emergency medical
20 services first responders have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their professional
21 capacities. Upon determination that an emergency medical services first responder is worthy of
22 this honor, the board shall submit the nomination to Speaker of the House and the President of
23 the Senate for consideration by the Legislature.

24 (e) Upon nomination by the Emergency Medical Services Honor Board, and adoption of a
25 concurrent resolution by the Legislature, the Governor shall bestow upon the nominee the Medal
26 of Valor.

27 (f) The Division of Arts, Culture and History shall create the design for the "Medal of Valor".

ARTICLE 33. FIREFIGHTERS HONOR BOARD.

§29-33-1. Firefighters Honor Board.

1 (a) The Firefighters Honor Board is established.

2 (b) The purpose of the board is to establish a "Medal for Bravery" award to recognize
3 firefighters in West Virginia who, in the performance of their duties, go above and beyond the
4 "call of duty" in responding to fires and other emergencies whether it be in the saving of life
5 or property, reducing the effects of fires and other hazards or prevention of injury.

6 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature that the board nominate, review and select those
7 firefighters who have gone above and beyond "the call of duty" in their professional capacities;

8 (d) Board membership. --

9 (1) The board shall consist of one member from each of the state's senatorial districts;

10 (2) Members shall be appointed by the State Senator representing that district;

11 (3) The board shall be comprised of firefighters, fire chiefs, and other professionals

12 who are qualified to evaluate and determine whether the actions of firefighters rise to the
13 level of being above and beyond the “call of duty”; and

14 (4) Members shall serve a one-year term.

15 (e) Members of the board serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement
16 for expenses, including travel expenses, which are actually incurred by the member in the official
17 conduct of the business of the board.

18 (f) The Division of Arts, Culture and History shall create the design for the “Medal For
19 Bravery.”

ARTICLE 34. LAW-ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS HONOR BOARD.

§29-34-1. Law-Enforcement Officers Honor Board.

1 (a) The Law-Enforcement Officers Honor Board is established.

2 (b) The purpose of the board is to establish a “Medal for Bravery” award to recognize
3 law-enforcement officers in West Virginia who, in the performance of their duties, go above
4 and beyond the “call of duty”.

5 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature that the board nominate, review and select those
6 firefighters who have gone above and beyond the “call of duty” in their professional law
7 enforcement capacities;

8 (d) Board membership. --

9 (1) The board shall consist of one member from each of the state’s senatorial districts;

10 (2) Members shall be appointed by the State Senator representing that district;

11 (3) The board shall be comprised of law enforcement officials such as sheriffs and
12 police captains, and other professionals who are qualified to evaluate and determine
13 whether the actions of law- enforcement officers rise to the level of being above and beyond
14 the “call of duty”; and

15 (4) Members shall serve a one-year term.

16 (e) Members of the board serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement

- 17 for expenses, including travel expenses, which are actually incurred by the member in the official
18 conduct of the business of the board.
- 19 (f) The Arts, Culture and History shall create the design for the “Medal for Bravery”.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create the Emergency Medical Services Honor Board, the Firefighters Honor Board, and the Law-Enforcement Officers Honor Board. The bill establishes Medals of Valor and Medals for Bravery for those EMS personnel, firefighters and law-enforcement officers who go above and beyond “the call of duty.” The bill establishes membership and duties of the boards.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.