

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2020 REGULAR SESSION

Committee Substitute

for

House Bill 4444

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WORRELL, MILLER, MAYNARD, LITTLE, SUMMERS,

HANSHAW (MR. SPEAKER) AND D. KELLY

[Originating in the Committee on Government

Organization; February 3, 2020.]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,
2 designated §29-32-1, §29-32-2, §29-32-3, §29-32-4, §29-32-5, all relating to establishing
3 Medals of Valor for emergency medical service members, firefighters, and law-
4 enforcement officers; establishing the Medal of Valor; establishing criteria for awarding the
5 Medal of Valor; prohibiting awarding of Medal of Valor in any manner than otherwise set
6 forth in this article; establishing the Firefighters Honors Board to recommend persons to
7 receive the Medal of Valor; establishing the Law-Enforcement Honor Board to recommend
8 persons to receive the Medal of Valor; establishing the Emergency Medical Services
9 Honor Board to recommend persons to receive the Medal of Valor; providing duties and
10 purpose of each board; setting forth the membership of each board, the manner of
11 membership selection, and the terms and conditions of service; setting forth process for
12 identifying candidates to receive Medal of Valor; setting forth process for considering
13 candidates to receive Medal of Valor; providing for submission of nominated persons to
14 Speaker of the House of Delegates and President of the Senate; directing Governor to
15 issue Medal of Valor to nominee upon adoption of concurrent resolution by Legislature;
16 and directing the Department of Arts, Culture and History create design for Medal of Valor.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 32. MEDALS OF VALOR.

§29-32-1. Medal of Valor.

1 (a) There is hereby established a Medal of Valor to be awarded to firefighters, law-
2 enforcement officers, and members of the Emergency Medical Services who distinguish
3 themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their lives above and beyond
4 the call of duty in the performance of their duties.

5 (b) A Medal of Valor can only be awarded in the manner set forth in this article.

§29-32-2. Firefighters Honor Board.

1 (a) The Firefighters Honor Board is established as an advisory board to the Legislature.
2 The purpose of the board is to recommend to the Legislature firefighters in West Virginia who
3 have distinguished themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their lives
4 above and beyond the call of duty in the performance of their duties to be awarded a Medal of
5 Valor.

6 (b) Board membership. —

7 (1) The board shall consist of two members from each of the state's senatorial districts.
8 Each State Senator shall appoint one member representing his or her district.

9 (2) The board shall be comprised of firefighters, fire chiefs, and other professionals
10 who are qualified to evaluate and determine whether the actions of emergency medical
11 services first responders rise to the level of being above and beyond the call of duty.

12 (3) Members shall serve a one-year term; and shall serve without compensation.

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

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

§29-32-3. Law Enforcement Officers Honor Board.

1 (a) The Law Enforcement Honor Board is established as an advisory board to the
2 Legislature. The purpose of the board is to recommend law enforcement officers in West
3 Virginia who distinguish themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their
4 lives above and beyond the call of duty in the performance of their duties to be awarded a Medal
5 of Valor.

6 (b) Board membership. —

7 (1) The board shall consist of two members from each of the state's senatorial districts.
8 Each State Senator shall appoint one member representing his or her district.

9 (2) The board shall be comprised of law enforcement officials, such as sheriffs and
10 police chiefs, and other professionals who are qualified to evaluate and determine
11 whether the actions of law enforcement officers rise to the level of being above and
12 beyond the call of duty.

13 (3) Members shall serve a one-year term, and shall serve without compensation.

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

17 (d) The board shall review identified individuals to determine if those first responders have
18 gone above and beyond the call of duty in their professional capacities. Upon determination that
19 a law enforcement officer is worthy of this honor, the board shall submit the nomination to the
20 Speaker of the House of Delegates and the President of the Senate for consideration by the
21 Legislature.

§29-32-4. 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 recommend members of the emergency medical
3 services in West Virginia who distinguish themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity
4 at the risk of their lives above and beyond the call of duty in the performance of their duties.

5 (b) Board membership. —

6 (1) The board shall consist of two members from each of the state's senatorial districts.
7 Each State Senator shall appoint one member representing his or her district.

8 (2) The board shall be comprised of emergency medical services personnel, medical
9 officials, doctors, and other professionals who are qualified to evaluate and determine

10 whether the actions of emergency medical services first responders rise to the level of
11 being above and beyond the call of duty.

12 (3) Members shall serve a one-year term; and shall serve without compensation.

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

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

§29-32-5. Awarding of the Medal of Valor.

1 (a) The Legislature may act on a nomination from one of the Honor Boards established by
2 this article by passing a concurrent resolution.

3 (b) Upon nomination by the Firefighters Honor Board, and adoption of a concurrent
4 resolution by the Legislature, the Governor shall bestow the Medal of Valor for Firefighters upon
5 the nominee.

6 (c) Upon nomination by the Law Enforcement Honor Board, and adoption of a concurrent
7 resolution by the Legislature, the Governor shall bestow the Medal of Valor for Law Enforcement
8 Officers upon the nominee.

9 (d) Upon nomination by the Emergency Medical Services Honor Board, and adoption of a
10 concurrent resolution by the Legislature, the Governor shall bestow the Medal of Valor for
11 Emergency Medical Services personnel upon the nominee.

12 (e) The West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History shall create the designs for
13 the Medal of Valor for Firefighters, Law Enforcement Officers, and Emergency Medical Services
14 personnel.

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