

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2022 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

### **Senate Bill 131**

BY SENATORS GRADY, BALDWIN, STOLLINGS, ROMANO,  
BEACH, PHILLIPS, HAMILTON, LINDSAY, WOODRUM,  
KARNES, TAKUBO, AND SMITH

[Introduced January 12, 2022; referred  
to the Committee on Government Organization]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,  
2 designated §10-3-3, relating to establishing a medal of excellence in honor of Chuck  
3 Yeager, known as the Chuck Yeager Mountain State Medal of Excellence; providing a  
4 process by which to annually provide this award to a West Virginian who demonstrates  
5 exceptional leadership, innovation, entrepreneurship, or creativity; and establishing other  
6 related criteria.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

### **ARTICLE 3. MONUMENTS, TABLETS AND MEMORIALS.**

#### **§10-3-3. Chuck Yeager Mountain State Medal of Excellence award.**

1 (a) Legislative findings. - The West Virginia Legislature recognizes the many  
2 achievements that the great West Virginian, U.S.A.F. General Charles Elwood “Chuck” Yeager  
3 achieved for the State of West Virginia. On Oct. 14, 1947, at the age of 24, General Chuck Yeager  
4 became the first person in the world to fly beyond the speed of sound, paving the way for  
5 generations of pilots to achieve supersonic flight for decades to come. The famed pilot’s flying  
6 adventures continued through his 89th birthday, when he broke the sound barrier yet again in an  
7 F-15 operated by another pilot in 2012, celebrating the 65th anniversary of the day he first flew  
8 beyond Mach 1. Sadly, General Chuck Yeager passed away on December 7, 2020, at the age of  
9 97. In commemorating the many achievements of General Chuck Yeager, the West Virginia  
10 Legislature believes that the establishment of the “Chuck Yeager Mountain State Medal of  
11 Excellence” award provides a unique opportunity to honor West Virginians who demonstrate the  
12 same spirit of achievement as General Chuck Yeager.

13 (b) Establishment of award. – The name of the medal and award program established by  
14 this section shall be known as the “Chuck Yeager Mountain State Medal of Excellence.” This  
15 award shall be awarded annually to a West Virginian who demonstrates exceptional leadership,  
16 innovation, entrepreneurship, or creativity in their career, their personal life, or through their  
17 community service. The award shall be given on an annual basis by the West Virginia State

18 Senate, with the Senate having the discretion to establish a time and place to give the award to  
19 the recipient. The family of the recipient shall be invited to attend the ceremony.

20 (c) *Criteria.* – The award may be given to any West Virginian who has demonstrated  
21 exceptional leadership, innovation, entrepreneurship, or creativity. The recipient shall be a West  
22 Virginian by birth, or someone who has relocated to West Virginia in the past three or more years  
23 and who has made a positive impact on their community and state. The award may not be given  
24 to a currently serving member of the Legislature.

25 (d) *Effective date.* – This section shall take effect on July 1, 2022, with the first award being  
26 given on January 1, 2023, with an annual award to occur every year thereafter.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create the “Chuck Yeager Mountain State Medal of Excellence” award.

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