

Authorizing Legislation

*One Hundred Seventh Congress
of the
United States of America*

AT THE FIRST SESSION

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Wednesday, the third day of January, two thousand and one An Act To authorize the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America
in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the 'Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act of 2001'.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF MEDAL.

After September 1, 2001, the President may award, and present in the name of Congress, a Medal of Valor of appropriate design, with ribbons and appurtenances, to a public safety officer who is cited by the Attorney General, upon the recommendation of the Medal of Valor Review Board, for extraordinary valor above and beyond the call of duty. The Public Safety Medal of Valor shall be the highest national award for valor by a public safety officer.

SEC. 3. MEDAL OF VALOR BOARD.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF BOARD- There is established a Medal of Valor Review Board (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the 'Board'), which shall be composed of 11 members appointed in accordance with subsection (b) and shall conduct its business in accordance with this Act.

(b) MEMBERSHIP-

(1) MEMBERS- The members of the Board shall be individuals with knowledge or expertise, whether by experience or training, in the field of public safety, of which--

(A) two shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(B) two shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

(C) two shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(D) two shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives; and

(E) three shall be appointed by the President, including one with experience in firefighting, one with experience in law enforcement, and one with experience in emergency services.

(2) TERM- The term of a Board member shall be 4 years.

(3) VACANCIES- Any vacancy in the membership of the Board shall not affect the powers of the Board and shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) OPERATION OF THE BOARD-

(A) CHAIRMAN- The Chairman of the Board shall be elected by the members of the Board from among the members of the Board.

(B) MEETINGS- The Board shall conduct its first meeting not later than 90 days after the appointment of the last member appointed of the initial group of members appointed to the Board. Thereafter, the Board shall meet at the call of the Chairman of the Board. The Board shall meet not less often than twice each year.

(C) VOTING AND RULES- A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum to conduct business, but the Board may establish a lesser quorum for conducting hearings scheduled by the Board. The Board may establish by majority vote any other rules for the conduct of the Board's business, if such rules are not inconsistent with this Act or other applicable law.

(c) DUTIES- The Board shall select candidates as recipients of the Medal of Valor from among those applications received by the National Medal of Valor Office. Not more often than once each year, the Board shall present to the Attorney General the name or names of those it recommends as Medal of Valor recipients. In a given year, the Board shall not be required to select any recipients but may not select more than 5 recipients. The Attorney General may in extraordinary cases increase the number of recipients in a given year. The Board shall set an annual timetable for fulfilling its duties under this Act.

(d) HEARINGS-

(1) IN GENERAL- The Board may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, administer such oaths, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Board considers advisable to carry out its duties.

(2) WITNESS EXPENSES- Witnesses requested to appear before the Board may be paid the same fees as are paid to witnesses under section 1821 of title 28, United States Code. The per diem and mileage allowances for witnesses shall be paid from funds appropriated to the Board.

(e) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES- The Board may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Board considers necessary to carry out its duties. Upon the request of the Board, the head of such department or agency may furnish such information to the Board.

(f) INFORMATION TO BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL- The Board shall not disclose any information which may compromise an ongoing law enforcement investigation or is otherwise required by law to be kept confidential.

SEC. 4. BOARD PERSONNEL MATTERS.

(a) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS- (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), each member of the Board shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Board.

(2) All members of the Board who serve as officers or employees of the United States, a State, or a local government, shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for those services.

(b) TRAVEL EXPENSES- The members of the Board shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies

under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of service for the Board.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER- The term 'public safety officer' means a person serving a public agency, with or without compensation, as a firefighter, law enforcement officer, or emergency services officer, as determined by the Attorney General. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term 'law enforcement officer' includes a person who is a corrections or court officer or a civil defense officer.

(2) STATE- The term 'State' means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

SEC. 7. NATIONAL MEDAL OF VALOR OFFICE.

There is established within the Department of Justice a National Medal of Valor Office. The Office shall provide staff support to the Board to establish criteria and procedures for the submission of recommendations of nominees for the Medal of Valor and for the final design of the Medal of Valor.

SEC. 8. CONFORMING REPEAL.

Section 15 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2214) is amended--

(1) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following new subsection (a):
'(a) ESTABLISHMENT- There is hereby established an honorary award for the recognition of outstanding and distinguished service by public safety officers to be known as the Director's Award For Distinguished Public Safety Service ('Director's Award').';

(2) in subsection (b)--

(A) by striking paragraph (1); and

(B) by striking '(2)';

(3) by striking subsections (c) and (d) and re-designating subsections (e), (f), and (g) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively; and

(4) in subsection (c), as so re-designated--

(A) by striking paragraph (1); and

(B) by striking '(2)'.

SEC. 9. CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT.

The Board shall consult with the Institute of Heraldry within the Department of Defense regarding the design and artistry of the Medal of Valor. The Board may also consider

suggestions received by the Department of Justice regarding the design of the medal, including those made by persons not employed by the Department.

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Vice President of the United States and President of the Senate.