

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2020 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4912

BY DELEGATE S. BROWN

[Introduced February 11, 2020; Referred to the
Committee on Veterans' Affairs and Homeland
Security]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §15-1G-1, §15-1G-2, §15-1G-4, §15-1G-8, §15-1G-9 and §15-1G-
 2 10 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, all relating to West Virginia service
 3 medals; providing for the award of the West Virginia distinguished service medal to
 4 recipients of the Purple Heart; and providing that there is full funding for the manufacture
 5 of the medals and awards approved by this article, together with the requirement that
 6 these service medals and awards are presented in an appropriate manner.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 1G. SERVICE MEDALS.

§15-1G-1. The West Virginia distinguished service medal.

1 The “West Virginia distinguished service medal” may be awarded to:

2 (a) ~~To~~ Former or present Governors of the State of West Virginia as commanders in chief
 3 of the West Virginia National Guard;

4 (b) ~~To~~ Such officers and enlisted men in the West Virginia National Guard as may have,
 5 or may hereafter render conspicuous or distinguished service in the line of duty, or who have
 6 displayed, or may hereafter display, conspicuous courage and gallantry while on duty with the
 7 West Virginia National Guard;

8 (c) ~~To~~ Individuals serving in the West Virginia National Guard who are holders of
 9 congressional medals of honor, United States distinguished service medals, United States
 10 distinguished service cross or equivalent awards of the United States Navy;

11 (d) ~~To~~ West Virginians who served in the Armed Forces of the United States in time of war
 12 and who have rendered conspicuous or distinguished service in the line of duty;

13 (e) ~~To~~ Not more than two civilians in any one year who shall have rendered, in the
 14 judgment of the military board of the State of West Virginia, conspicuous or distinguished service
 15 to the West Virginia National Guard, the State of West Virginia or the United States of America;

16 (f) Recipients of the Purple Heart.

17 The West Virginia distinguished service medal may be awarded posthumously to the next

18 of kin of any officer, enlisted man or woman, or civilian entitled thereto under the foregoing
 19 subdivisions.

§15-1G-2. West Virginia legion of merit.

1 The "West Virginia legion of merit" may be awarded for exceptional meritorious service,
 2 achievement or bravery to:

3 (a) ~~To~~ Present or former officers and enlisted members of the West Virginia National
 4 Guard;

5 (b) ~~To~~ Present or former members of active military components, National Guard members
 6 of other states and other reserve components;

7 (c) ~~To~~ Civilians who have rendered conspicuous or distinguished service to the West
 8 Virginia National Guard, the State of West Virginia or the United States of America.

§15-1G-4. Other West Virginia awards and decorations.

1 The Adjutant General ~~is authorized to~~ may establish other West Virginia awards and
 2 decorations to recognize officers and members of the West Virginia National Guard or other
 3 individuals as may be deemed appropriate.

4 Such awards and decorations will be established by the issuance of appropriate orders by
 5 the Adjutant General and furnished at the expense of the state. The Adjutant General shall
 6 establish procedures for the granting of such awards or decorations.

§15-1G-8. Devices for the award of multiple West Virginia decorations.

1 ~~In the event~~ If any person ~~shall render~~ renders service or ~~perform~~ performs acts entitling
 2 ~~such~~ that person to the award of a West Virginia decoration, and the award of such decoration
 3 has previously been made, the person ~~shall~~, for each subsequent award ~~be entitled to~~ may wear
 4 a bronze oak leaf cluster. A silver oak leaf cluster shall be used in lieu of five bronze oak leaf
 5 clusters.

§15-1G-9. Procurement of West Virginia decorations.

1 The Adjutant General shall annually submit to the Legislature a request for an

2 appropriation sufficient to fully cover the cost of all West Virginia decorations established in
3 accordance with this article, including the veterans service decoration and Service Cross and
4 ribbon bar, authorized by §15-1G-10 of this code.

§15-1G-10. West Virginia veterans service decoration; West Virginia Service Cross.

1 (a) In addition to any other medals or awards authorized under the provisions of this article,
2 the following medals are authorized:

3 (1) A West Virginia veterans service decoration may be awarded to any resident of West
4 Virginia who served in any of the five federally recognized military services for a period at a time
5 during which there was armed conflict.

6 (2) A West Virginia Service Cross and ribbon bar, along with a certificate signed by the
7 Governor and State Adjutant General, may be awarded to any veteran who meets the criteria set
8 forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection, and who also was awarded a federal achievement
9 medal, commendation medal, meritorious service medal or a medal for valor by one of the five
10 federally recognized military services.

11 (b) West Virginia National Guard members may also be authorized to receive and wear
12 the medals and ribbons authorized under the provisions of this section in an order of precedence
13 determined by the Adjutant General.

14 (c) The Adjutant General may propose rules pursuant to §29A-3-1 *et seq.* of this code to
15 implement the provisions of this section and article, which shall ensure the proper manufacture of
16 the service medals and awards approved by this article and that these service medals and awards
17 are presented in an appropriate manner.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide for the award of the West Virginia distinguished service medal to recipients of the Purple Heart; provide that there is full funding for the manufacture of the medals and awards approved by this article, including the veterans service decoration and. Service Cross and ribbon bar; and that these service medals and awards are presented in an appropriate manner.

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