

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5408

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**As Reported By House Committee On:**  
State Government

**Title:** An act relating to a state medal of valor.

**Brief Description:** Creating a state medal of valor.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Benton, Hale, Shin, Winsley, Patterson and Rossi).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

State Government: 2/18/00, 2/22/00 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Establishes a state Medal of Valor.
- Creates the State Medal of Valor Committee.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Campbell, Republican Vice Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Dunshee; Haigh; Lambert and D. Schmidt.

**Staff:** Andrea Leder (786-7093); and Jim Morishima (786-7191).

**Background:**

In 1986 a decoration of the state Medal of Merit was established along with the accompanying ribbons and appurtenances. The Medal of Merit is awarded by the Governor to a person for exceptionally meritorious conduct in performing outstanding services to the people and the state. Honorees are nominated by the Governor's State Medal of Merit Committee.

In 1994, a decoration of the state Law Enforcement Medal of Honor was established along with the accompanying ribbons and appurtenances. The Medal of Honor is awarded by the Governor to law enforcement officers seriously injured or killed in the line of duty or officers who have been distinguished by exceptionally meritorious conduct. Honorees are nominated by the Governor's State Law Enforcement Medal of Honor Committee.

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**Summary of Bill:**

A decoration of the state Medal of Valor is established. This decoration is awarded to an individual who has saved, or attempted to save, the life of another at the risk of serious injury or death to himself or herself. The medal is presented by the Governor during a joint session of both houses.

The State Medal of Valor Committee is created for selecting honorees. The committee, which meets annually, includes the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or their designees. The Secretary of State is a nonvoting ex officio member who serves as the committee's secretary. The committee must adopt rules establishing the qualifications for the state Medal of Valor and the protocol governing the decoration, certificate, and appurtenances.

Anyone may nominate a state resident for this award. However, individuals employed by a government entity in any branch of law enforcement, fire fighting, rescue, or other hazardous profession are not eligible for the award. The medal may be awarded posthumously.

Descriptions of the decoration of the state medal and the accompanying certificate are provided.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** None.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** None.